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CHURCH, COMMUNITY, AND STATE

Volume II

# THE CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING OF MAN

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by Sir Walter Moberly, Professor Max Huber, John Maud, President Henry Sloane Coffin, President John Mackay and with an introduction by J. H. Oldham

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# THE CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING OF MAN

*by*

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# GENERAL INTRODUCTION

FEW will question the significance of the issues which engaged the attention of the conference on Church, Community, and State held at Oxford in July 1937. More important than the conference itself is the continuing process, in which the conference was not more than an incident, of an attempt on the part of the Christian Churches collectively—without, up to the present, the official participation of the Church of Rome, but not without the unofficial help of some of its thinkers and scholars[1]—to understand the true nature of the vital conflict between the Christian faith and the secular and pagan tendencies of our time, and to see more clearly the responsibilities of the Church in relation to the struggle. What is at stake is the future of Christianity. The Christian foundations of western civilization have in some places been swept away and are everywhere being undermined. The struggle to-day concerns those common assumptions regarding the meaning of life without which, in some form, no society can cohere. These vast issues are focussed in the relation of the Church to the State and to the community, because the non-Christian forces of to-day are tending more and more to find embodiment in an all-powerful State, committed to a particular philosophy of life and seeking to organize the whole of life in accordance with a particular doctrine of the end of man's existence, and in an all-embracing community life which claims to be at once the source and the goal of all human activities: a State, that is to say, which aims at being also a Church.

[1] A volume of papers by Roman Catholic writers dealing with subjects closely akin to the Oxford Conference and stimulated in part by the preparatory work for Oxford will be published shortly under the title *Die Kirche Christi: ihre heilende, gestaltende und ordnende Kraft für den Menschen und seine Welt.*

To aid in the understanding of these issues the attempt was made in preparation for the conference at Oxford to enlist as many as possible of the ablest minds in different countries in a common effort to think out some of the major questions connected with the theme of the conference. During the three years preceding the conference studies were undertaken wider in their range and more thorough in their methods than any previous effort of a similar kind on the part of the Christian Churches. This was made possible by the fact that the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work, under whose auspices the conference was held, possessed a Department of Research at Geneva with two full-time directors and was also able, in view of the conference, to establish an office in London with two full-time workers and to set up an effective agency for the work of research in America. There was thus provided the means of circulating in mimeographed form (in many instances in three languages) a large number of papers for comment, of carrying on an extensive and continuous correspondence, and of maintaining close personal touch with many leading thinkers and scholars in different countries.

Intensive study over a period of three years was devoted to nine main subjects. The results of this study are embodied in the six volumes to which this general introduction relates and in two others. The plan and contents of each, and most of the papers, were discussed in at least two or three small international conferences or groups. The contributions were circulated in first draft to a number of critics in different countries and comments were received often from as many as thirty or forty persons. Nearly all the papers were revised, and in some instances entirely rewritten, in the light of these criticisms.

Both the range of the contributions and the fact that

the papers have taken their present shape as the result of a wide international interchange of ideas give these books an oecumenical character which marks a new approach to the subjects with which they deal. They thus provide an opportunity such as has hardly existed before for the study in an oecumenical context of some of the grave and pressing problems which to-day concern the Christian Church throughout the world.

The nine subjects to which preparatory study was devoted were the following:

1. The Christian Understanding of Man.
2. The Kingdom of God and History.
3. The Christian Faith and the Common Life.
4. The Church and Its Function in Society.
5. Church and Community.
6. Church and State.
7. Church, Community and State in Relation to the Economic Order.
8. Church, Community and State in Relation to Education.
9. The Universal Church and the World of Nations.

The last six of these subjects were considered at the Oxford Conference, and the reports prepared by the sections into which the conference was divided will be found in the official report of the conference entitled *The Churches Survey Their Task* (Allen and Unwin, 5s.).

A volume on *The Church and its Function in Society*, by Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft and Dr. J. H. Oldham (Allen and Unwin, 8s. 6d.) was published prior to the conference.

Three of the volumes in the present series of six have to do with the first three subjects in the list already given. These are fundamental issues which underlie the study

of all the other subjects. The titles of these volumes are:

*The Christian Understanding of Man.*
*The Kingdom of God and History.*
*The Christian Faith and the Common Life.*

The remaining three volumes in the series are a contribution to the study of three of the main subjects considered by the Oxford Conference. These are:

*Church and Community.*
*Church, Community and State in Relation to Education.*
*The Universal Church and the World of Nations.*

The subject of Church and State is treated in a book by Mr. Nils Ehrenström, one of the directors of the Research Department. This has been written in the light of discussions in several international conferences and groups and of a wide survey of the relevant literature, and has been published under the title *Christian Faith and the Modern State* (Student Christian Movement, 6s.).

The planning and shaping of the volume is to a large extent the work of the directors of the Research Department, Dr. Hans Schönfeld and Mr. Nils Ehrenström. The editorial work and the preparation of the volumes for the press owes everything to the continuous labour of Miss Olive Wyon, who has also undertaken or revised the numerous translations, and in the final stages to the Rev. E. S. Shillito, who during the last weeks accepted the responsibility of seeing the books through the press. Valuable help and advice was also given throughout the undertaking by Professor H. P. Van Dusen and Professor John Bennett of America.

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*PART I*

# THE SCIENTIFIC ACCOUNT OF MAN

## I

*by*

T. E. Jessop

## THE SCIENTIFIC ACCOUNT OF MAN

If anything in the history of human effort has succeeded it is science. In many respects it has even exceeded the high hopes set upon it. Regarded theoretically, it has fashioned systems of description and explanation of vast comprehensiveness and astonishing exactitude, organized logically and confirmed by observation and experiment. Regarded practically, it has given us a control over the forces of Nature which has lifted us far above the helplessness of animals, thereby intensifying our humanity. We rise and sleep, work and play, in the keeping of science. We are almost dominated by it. This is one of the distinguishing marks of modern civilization.

This dominance is being interpreted in many quarters as a challenge to religion. It is an old interpretation. Every major advance in science has been pressed to put religion on the defensive—in the seventeenth century the Copernican theory as revived by Galileo and Kepler, in the eighteenth Newtonian mechanics, in the nineteenth the theory of evolution. In the present century biochemistry bids fair to become the new weapon. At the moment psychology is a fashionable basis of attack, but since it has a very elusive subject-matter and no agreed technique with which to subdue this, it cannot yet be allowed the authority which belongs by achievement to the material sciences. From one side or another science has been repeatedly put before us as an intellectual attitude, a method of inquiry, and a body of tested knowledge, having an at least *prima facie* opposition to the spirit and content of religious belief. Is the opposition real and deep? If it is, which of the two is to be preferred? If it is not, how does the appearance of opposition arise?

By the scientific account of man is in fact meant sometimes the knowledge of man that is found *within* the sciences (knowledge scientifically evidenced), sometimes a speculative extension of this knowledge. The two must be sharply distinguished. The latter is a form of philosophy, but it is popularly accepted as scientific because it is based on science, is put forward in the name of science, and comes to us sometimes—by no means always—through scientists. It is difficult to state, for it is rather a body of suppositions than a developed doctrine. It may fairly be summarized by saying that man can be sufficiently described and explained with nothing but the ideas and principles of the natural sciences, or at any rate that we have nothing but these at our disposal. A concrete expression of it by one of its most distinguished advocates will be the best illustration:

> "That man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; that all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system—all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand."[1]

What sort of life such a view of man—here very nobly and movingly stated—would require us to live is not at all clear. Russell himself would have us "maintain our

[1] Bertrand Russell, *Philosophical Essays* (1910), p. 60 f.

own ideals against a hostile universe," which is undoubtedly heroic and undoubtedly illogical, an unexcused and unexamined dualism. Other advocates have other precepts ranging from the recommendation of the Christian ethic without its Christian grounds to the call for eugenic breeding or psycho-analytic catharsis. The aim is to exclude any religious view of man. A man's significance and obligations are exhausted in his relation to his fellows; there is no "supernatural" environment or order or person to provide a higher explanation of his being, a higher object of obligation, and a higher ground for the obligations he is under anyhow as a member of society.

Any examination of this philosophy of man must obviously begin with the properly scientific doctrine of man on which it is based. Of the latter I shall first give some samples, partly to give concreteness to the discussion but chiefly to show that it does appear to provide strong grounds for the philosophy; and then pass from statement of content to an analysis of its authority. Finally, I shall consider whether the authority which belongs to the doctrine *quâ* scientific remains when the doctrine is speculatively generalized into a philosophy.

## I

The background of the scientific view of man is the scientific view of the physical universe. It was in the new astronomy of Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, and Newton that science gave the first shock to the religious conception of man. Before Copernicus the universe was conceived as a series of concentric crystalline spheres—the largest bearing the fixed stars, the rest each bearing a planet—with God encompassing the outermost one and with the

earth at the centre of them all. The most prominent positions, it will be noted, were occupied by God and man. Besides, everything beyond the earth and its atmosphere was thought to be made of one ethereal substance and to be eternally regular in its operations, whereas the earth, made of the four "elements," was the one sphere of chance, change, and decay. This Aristotelico-Ptolemaic astronomy, obviously adaptable to the Christian world-view, received the sanction of the scholars of medieval Christendom. But when Newton, gathering and mathematically organizing the conclusions of his predecessors, had finished his work, we were shown a universe with neither assignable boundaries nor an assignable centre and with no distinction of stuff or law between its celestial and its terrestrial parts: the earth was thrust out of the centre, the stars were seen to be themselves suns, and the orbits of the heavenly bodies were understood through the study of a swinging pendulum and a falling ball. Subsequent investigations have widened our conception of the immensity of the universe, emphasized the cosmic triviality of our earth, and confirmed in astonishing detail the material and formal homogeneity of the whole. The dawning of this new world-view roused some of the thinkers of the Renaissance to pantheistic intoxication; in the eighteenth century the mathematical systematization of it led to deism; and in the middle of the nineteenth, fortified by new triumphs in physics and chemistry, it supported a brief though influential materialism. A more recent physics has substituted probability for the confident finalities of Büchner and Tyndall, and has deeply modified the Newtonian theory, but the modifications are highly technical and so far as our present point is concerned leave the scheme essentially the same—the physical universe is describable and "explicable" through a mathematics which never

uses the hypothesis of God, the earth is a trifle in it, and the whole career of man, being far shorter than that of the earth, less than a trifle. The simple picture which for centuries provided the cosmology of faith, investing the theatre of man's life with cosmic centrality and placing it under the irregular influence of a God just beyond the relatively near stars, has been destroyed by science.

The next shock came from biology, within living memory. The theory of evolution was directed against the age-long supposition of the fixity of living kinds—that rabbits have always been born of rabbits and monkeys of monkeys. Its extension to man was both antecedently probable and soon called for by special evidence. The evidence is circumstantial, cumulative, convergent. Fundamentally it consists in showing that virtually continuous chains of only slightly differing structures between long-extinct and present living things are not merely imaginable but largely verifiable in fossil remains. What the natural factors were that produced the successive differences—that is, how heritable novelties of structure and function arose—is still a matter of controversy. Darwin's version of the evolutionary theory does not seem to touch effectively the question of originating factors; it is concerned chiefly with survival. The question answered by his doctrine of natural selection was: how, taking a group of features as given, did the organisms that first got them come to establish themselves as a self-perpetuating stock? If an individual appears with features differing markedly from those of its species, it is not likely to survive if the new features place it at a disadvantage in that adjustment to environment which alone maintains life; and if they make it less able to win a mate, either by direct attraction or by combat with rivals, they and it would disappear together. Those types of organism survive which are equipped for the struggle on the one hand for individual

existence, on the other hand for mates. The process of survival and elimination has, of course, a different incidence from place to place and from time to time, following differences in the balance of environmental factors.

All this has no less and no more reference to man than to any other living being. The formulae of the transformation of species and the survival of the fittest cover everything that has a bodily life. The evidence of a man's special affinity with the apes is of exactly the same kind as the evidence of the affinity of lions with cats and of rabbits with mice, that is, the presence of deep structural resemblances. Until a quite late stage the human embryo has the same sequence of developing formations as the embryo of a gorilla or a chimpanzee; when adult it has the same sort of skeleton (even to the number of spinal vertebrae), a very similar arrangement of teeth (dentition has been found to be of great importance in zoological classification), and a very similar brain. In skeleton, muscles, and organs there seems to be no greater difference between man and gorilla than there is between the gorilla and the lower apes. To construct a zoological class which includes all the apes and yet excludes man would therefore be a howler, a classificatory scandal. And to regard the accumulation of anatomical and physiological similarities as merely coincidental, independent, would be to renounce the business of science. Some hypothesis has to be found. For the hypothesis of man's community of descent with the other members of his zoological class the zoologist has the evidence for evolution in the other classes, the embryological similarities, and the approximation to the ape-like stock in the oldest skeletons of prehistoric man.

The case for evolution rests on a huge mass of similarities and serial relationships for which a biological textbook

must be consulted, and no one who is unwilling to work in some detail through this mass of interlocking details has any right to pass a public judgment upon it. To pick out from the general doctrine the one article that man arose from a sub-human stock and either except this from the theory or deny the whole theory because of this is to attack a large scientific issue from a ground which is both narrow and extraneous. Man's sense of his significance is irrelevant to biology, falling outside both the sphere of its problems and the sphere of its evidence, for biology is only the study of the bodily structures, observable activities, and vital relations of all living things regarded simply as living; like each of the other sciences, it isolates its own field. The evolutionary theory was designed to meet, and must first be judged by, its success in solving or at least mitigating the problems within this field, and the persons competent to judge it have accepted it because it brings together facts which otherwise would be left in a heap, and relates more comprehensively and verifiably facts which hitherto had been related by mere static similarity; because the difficulties it in turn raises are both fewer and less important, within biology, than those it removes; and because it gives guidance and stimulus to research. These are the general marks of any good theory within any branch of inquiry.

Zoologists, then, have shown us that we have descended from brutes. But they are as little blind as the rest of us to the immense distance that divides us from the highest of the brutes. What is it that makes man, for all his animality, a class apart? His erect posture, his consequently free forelimbs making possible the fashioning and use of tools, and his large brain, are present with a difference of degree only in the higher apes. So long as we keep to the level of structure we remain within the domain of zoological comparison. Is mind, then, peculiar to man?

The general body of competent opinion affirms that it is not. The opinion rests on the impossibility as yet of describing and explaining the total external behaviour of many animals in purely physiological terms such as tropisms and reflexes activated by physico-chemical stimuli either from within or without; we cannot go far without terms like perception and emotion, which, of course, refer to a psychological order. In other words, some of their behaviour shows so close a resemblance to the simpler forms of human behaviour as to give us reason for inferring that the mental factor known to be operative here is operative there also. Is there, however, some one function of mind that only man possesses, for example, intelligence? If intelligence means the ability to behave appropriately in situations not completely provided for by reflex and instinct, some animals below man certainly possess intelligence. Köhler's experiments with chimpanzees amount to a demonstration of this, though they show that the most intelligent of brutes rise no higher than a three-year-old child. But if intelligence means free or abstract thinking, the conscious analysis of complex things and situations and the conscious recognition of their elements and relations in other contexts, it belongs to man alone. The clearest sign of abstract thought is speech: the two are invariably correlated, arise simultaneously, and develop *pari passu.* Man emerged when an animal spoke.

Thought and speech are not, of course, man's only peculiarities; and if speech were our only criterion we should never be able to get direct evidence whether prehistoric man was really man or not. Why, then, do we call him man? Because he could kindle fires, make and use tools, draw pictures on tusks and cavern walls, and because he buried his dead with attentions that can only be construed as an expression of belief in another

life after the eclipse of this one. In a word, he had a culture, meaning by this organized and persistent activities that require for their explanation developed mental powers and transmission not by animal heredity but by tradition; all almost certainly involving speech. The detailed and overwhelming similarities of man's body to that of the anthropoid apes only serve to throw into more impressive relief these peculiarities of man's behaviour.

Science gives a very distant date for the appearance of man. The literal interpretation of *Genesis* makes of man a primeval kind, originated at a stroke, and Archbishop Ussher's computation dates his creation to six thousand years ago. Anthropologists date the first fairly certain remains of man to anywhere between a whole and half a million years ago, and the first traces of the anthropoid ape, a stock not ancestral to but collateral with man, to several million years earlier. Old as he is, then, man is a relatively late comer in the world. And, slow in appearing, he was slow in developing; for nearly the whole of the period since his emergence he remained at the prehistoric stage, rising no higher than the neolithic type of culture. To the slowness of this prehistoric era the swift development of historical times is an astonishing contrast. But the root of it all, slow or quick, is the supersession of reflex and instinct by thought, and the differentiation and refinement of emotion and desire which thought makes possible. Reflex and instinct are effective in an animal's normal environment but inept outside of it. Conscious thought, on the other hand, does not have this fixity as the condition of its efficiency; it is stimulated by change of environment, and has proved itself able within very liberal limits to reverse the order characteristic of the biological realm by adapting the environment to itself. In addition, it has devised a new

mode of transmission to succeeding generations: man can embody and perpetuate what he has learned in words and works and institutions. It is this preservation and accumulation of achievements through the generations that gives to the pace of culture its increasing acceleration. Man should develop more in the next than he has done in the past ten thousand years.

The distance that divides the modern man from the neolithic man of nearly ten thousand years ago, and the vaster distance that divides even the latter from the highest of the brutes, is a measure of our dignity within the natural order open to scientific investigation. The scientific study of man, far from denying this dignity, has confirmed it, analysed it, traced the history of it, and discovered some of its promoting and obstructing conditions.

But only some of those conditions. In man's dignity it finds no cosmic significance; that is, such remarkable phenomena as art, social institutions, morality, religion and science itself are not taken as data revelatory of an aspect, *sui generis*, of the ultimate nature of things. They are interpreted as simply resultants of the physico-chemical and biological factors in the comprehension of which science has won its spurs. This for several reasons: firstly, because these factors are relatively well understood and are still open to investigation; secondly, because of the cosmological assumption that there was a time when there was nothing but physical elements in very simple combinations; and thirdly, because of the general postulate of the causal continuity of Nature. It must be admitted that the attempts that have so far been made to exhibit how the cultural behaviour of humans can have evolved by "natural necessity" out of animal behaviour, and this out of physico-chemical reactions, have been too speculative to deserve to be called scientific. Nevertheless there is a mass of evidence, not easy to organize

logically, pointing to the earthbound nature of man. Much of it does but amplify, clarify and more widely confirm what is familiar to us in the ordinary course of experience. We all know, for example, that it is by an animal process that human individuals are generated, and that the generation is often accidental in the grave sense of being unintended. When science adds that we begin our life not as infants but as tiny and brutish germ-cells, it adds plausibility to its theory, which has abundant evidence of its own, that our race originated in a brutish stock. We are learning that we inherit our stature, the colour of our hair and eyes, and other bodily features, by the same mechanism, operating with the same regularity, by which mice and sweet peas inherit their colour. Like animals, we have to eat, and sleep, and exercise in order to live at all. We know too that we hold our life by material threads which material agencies can only too easily sever: a flash of lightning, a sunless summer or a severe winter, or a few microscopic germs can carry us off without the slightest respect for our super-animal attainments. And these attainments sometimes leave us; in panic and extreme anger and hunger and pain we can and do sink back to the level of animal behaviour—except that we are aware of the lapse and can condemn it.

But our specifically human mental life? That the character as well as the existence of this is not merely connected with but conditioned by the body is a commonplace of experience. Catarrh impairs the memory; indigestion determines a mood, and when chronic one's philosophy; and a tumour on the brain may bring the mental ruin we call insanity. Of such bondage to the body science has enlarged the tale. One of the most interesting of recent investigations deals with the functions of a certain type of gland, called ductless or endocrine, which pours

secretions into the blood. Cretinism, a form of infantile idiocy, has been known for some time to be due to congenital deficiency in the secretion of the thyroid gland. More recently an intimate relation has been discovered between the suprarenal glands (above the kidneys) and our emotional life. In an angering situation they are stimulated, and far-reaching changes—such as tenseness of the muscles, changes in the pulse and pressure and distribution of the blood, dilatation of the pupils—of which anger is largely the mental reverberation, are due to the action of the suprarenal hormone. It seems likely that all emotions have glandular conditions, at any rate so far as their bodily accompaniments are concerned—and any emotion without its characteristic bodily accompaniment would be so weak and colourless as to have neither the feel nor the efficacy of an emotion. Of course, the endocrine glands do not work alone; they condition and are conditioned by one another and the other structures of the body. Investigation of them is still immature. But enough is known to oblige us to regard them as powerful determinants of emotion, mood, and temperament. To be concrete, a person who finds it easy, without prior discipline, to be cheerful and patient, has probably a fortunate glandular endowment. Corpulent people, for instance, are usually of a happy disposition, and corpulence, when natural, seems to be due to the glandular economy. Much of the material of the moral life, then, appears to rest on a physiological accident. There is a cheerfulness which is not a virtue, and an irascibility which is only a disease—a scientific ground for the extension of charity. Still, this subjection of ours to our glands may be overstressed. It is not the direct action of circumstance on the suprarenals that makes us angry, but our interpretation of the circumstance; the glands are activated by a mental act. Nevertheless, it seems probable

that people who are characteristically emotional and those who are characteristically emotionless are what they are because of glandular unbalance. Like other physiological structures, the endocrine glands partly serve the mind and partly determine it.

When we leave this borderland between physiology and psychology for psychology itself, we leave the realm of general agreement for one of general controversy. It is not yet able to stand as an equal alongside the older natural sciences I have been drawing upon, for its exponents differ not only about specific points but also about such fundamental matters as its boundaries, methods, and criteria. It is still an incoherent aggregate of many theories. In consequence it is meaningless to appeal, as is now fashionable, to the "modern psychological theory of man." There isn't *one*. Most people appear to mean by the phrase the psycho-analytic theory. This also is not one but many, being torn by major domestic controversies; and it is still far more a speculative (if not fanciful) handmaid to medicine than a science. Psychology deserves, indeed, to be considered, but it can be neither presented nor examined as the older sciences can be. This short chapter, to maintain any sort of unity, must omit it; and it must omit also, for somewhat similar reasons, the rich material of the science of history.

## II

A summary statement of scientific doctrines is a poor way of bringing out their real worth, for summaries are dogmatic and so far unscientific. The cogency of science appears not in its gross conclusions but in the detailed linkages that lead up to and establish them. To accept a summary without knowing what makes it credible

is to be credulous, and the readiness with which the public will now believe almost anything if it be called scientific is making this age, in which science most prevails, the most unscientific age of all. Of course, other ages have had their credulities, but to be credulous of that which exists to dispel credulity is the peculiar cultural vulgarity of these days. If science could communicate to the public less of its content and more of its standards of thinking, the talk about the conflict of religion and science would be raised to a decent level of effort and insight.

To discover the authority of science we must ask the question what it is that makes a scientific conclusion scientific. What is *meant* by a scientific doctrine? Not a particular body of results, since these are ever changing, and not, as is popularly supposed, whatever scientists say even in their professional moments. Science is a spirit articulated in a set of methods and criteria and such knowledge as exemplifies and satisfies these. Take an intense curiosity and redeem it of flabbiness and waywardness by concentrating it on a demarcated field of objects; combine with it a refusal to conclude without evidence; refine this demand for evidence into a conscious realization of what evidence consists in and of the need for method as well as patience to reach it: and you have the mentality that creates science. It is the exercise of this mentality that makes a man a scientist, not the mere possession of knowledge which that mentality in other minds has won.

Objectively, the fundamental marks of science are clarity, system, and evidence. These are a trinity of cognitive values, ideals, or ends implicit in the cognitive impulse when this is considered in itself, divorced from the influence of emotion and the needs of action. They are the marks of science in a sense of this term wider than is now usually understood; the limitation will be made shortly.

Clarity is definiteness, unambiguity. In a fully scientific inquiry every important term is either defined or referred to a definite datum. Consider the striking contrast between a layman's notion of common salt and the chemist's notion of it as composed of the elements sodium and chlorine in a certain proportion; or the orderly explicitness of the zoologist's conception of an animal as a material body that has sensitivity, grows and maintains itself and reproduces its kind by converting organic compounds into its own substance and by reconverting them into energy and waste. Probably the most perfect conceptual clarity is to be found in mathematics, and it is the ease with which the subject-matter of physics lends itself to mathematical statement (through measurement) that has made physics the clearest of the sciences that deal with empirical fact. Clarity is required because it is the first condition of efficiency—in obscurity and vagueness thinking loses its way. Start on a clear plane and you have every chance of remaining on it; begin in a muddle and you will probably end in one. For this reason the scientist will sometimes procure a definition at almost any cost, even at the cost of making one arbitrarily. Adequacy can come only at the end of the inquiry, but the beginning must be at least clear. Those who cannot see this, who cannot sympathize with the scientist's frequent preference, for reasons of method, of definiteness to adequacy, of clarity to truth, lack a primary qualification for the appreciation of science. The characteristic way to clarity is analysis and abstraction: a complex phenomenon is split up into its elements, which are then studied piecemeal and so far abstractly. If any are confusing they are ignored for a while. When, for instance, the scientific study of motion was begun, friction and air-resistance were left out as disturbing factors and not re-introduced until the laws of motion in a supposititious vacuum had been worked out. In

its early stages every science has to make such abstractions, such simplifications, for the sake of clarity. It is still impossible for economics, for example, to be at once clear and concrete.

Clarity achieved, system becomes possible (since only a determinate proposition has determinate relations), and the achievement of system is the perfection of clarity. That clarity and system are the really fundamental marks of science must be stressed, for there is a widespread supposition, curiously silly, that loyalty to fact is the mark and monopoly of science. It is, of course, the mark of nothing more than common sense, of which scientists have no monopoly. Where facts are concerned, what distinguishes a scientist's knowledge from an intelligent layman's is not his adherence to them but his organization of them. Certainly the long tradition of self-conscious thought has always meant by a science a body of propositions that stand together by intrinsic logical bonds. This is why pure mathematics ranks as a science, although it may not have a single fact in it; and why theology is a science, or at any rate was in the hands of such logical masters as Aquinas and Calvin, although its dominant content is not fact in the usual sense of the word. An intellectual conscience which cannot bear to leave anything in isolation, unrelated, underlies them all. It works through generalization and deduction repeated on mounting planes—Tycho Brahe establishing the primary facts of planetary motion, Kepler discovering laws from which they can be deduced, Newton rising to more general laws from which Kepler's and yet other laws can all be derived. As a science advances the idea of system becomes increasingly operative, and as it gains dominance it acts not simply as an organizing concept but also as a source of evidence: when laws or theories each of which has its own empirical grounds are seen

to be convergent, interlocking, or all deducible from a more general law, their systematic interconnection is regarded as additional evidence for them, compensating for any deficiency in the empirical evidence for each taken separately. The strength of a theory lies as much in its relation to other theories as in its relation to the facts it immediately covers. All laws of fact are imperfectly established by fact, but when they fall together into one system their amenability to logical fellowship is a further symptom of their truth. It is for this reason that the piecemeal criticism of an advanced science such as physics or of a widely based and widely organizing theory such as that of evolution, is unintelligent. Only of undeveloped sciences such as psychology and anthropology—undeveloped because the basis of accredited fact is too small or still unclear, or the higher organization of it wanting or too speculative—is the piecemeal method of criticism at all fair. The protagonists of religion have not always been mindful of this. Always criticism should remember the double obligation of a science of fact—its fidelity to system as well as to fact.

Clarity and system are the constitutive ideals of science as such. It is they that convert knowledge into scientific knowledge. Any narrower definition of science would exclude pure mathematics and would thereby be paradoxical. But the degree to which clarity and system are realized in the several branches of expert study is very different. Why? Not because of differing range but because of differing kind of subject-matter. This introduces the third ideal, evidence. The differences of subject-matter that have forced us to have not Science but sciences, the really divisive differences, are differences in kind of evidence. The deepest way of distinguishing mathematics, physics, psychology, and ethics is not to name their respective subject-matters but to say that while all require

logical evidence (this being largely, if not entirely, synonymous with system) pure mathematics requires nothing else, physics must have sensory evidence, psychology must be content with a more fugitive and less patent kind of evidence, while ethics seeks evidence of value. Each of these sciences is typical of a group, and the groups may for convenience of identification be called respectively abstract, objective natural, subjective natural, and philosophical sciences.

Now by the scientific doctrine of man is usually meant so much of the knowledge of man as is gained through the sciences of the second group, namely, physics, chemistry, biology, and certain derivatives or mixtures of these (e.g. geography). When we say that their *specifically* defining feature is the admission of only sensory and logical (including mathematical) evidence we mean that the only data they will recognize are perceptual data and the only inferences they will allow from them are logical ones. An objective natural science is the study of a definite field of perceptual existents under the ideal of logical system. The nature of its authority follows from this definition. For the distinctive feature of both sensory and logical evidence is that they are public, public in the twofold sense that they are accessible to everybody and that they are independent of private prejudice; and it is this patent publicity which makes possible that fruitful co-operative study and that exposure of assertions to an irresistible check which are among the most striking features of scientific work. What is square to you is square to me. Area and volume, density and weight, the pattern and dimensions of the solar system, the structure of the human brain and its relation to the brain of an ape, whether a particular gland is at work when we are angry—all these are questions that can only be set and only be settled in the long run through direct per-

ceptual vision. Personal conviction and idiosyncrasies of experience are irrelevant. Every statement about the perceptual aspect of a perceptual thing is in principle, and to a remarkable degree in practice, susceptible of clinching verification and refutation. The accumulating agreement within and the authority of the objective natural sciences are due to their keeping to the perceptual, to the sphere of public demonstrability. Any form of inquiry that admits non-perceptual data and any verification other than perception and logical coherence departs from the type of science set by physics, chemistry, and biology, and to that extent is scientific in a sense that lacks the authority attaching to these. Psychology, and the social sciences in so far as they are directed upon or presuppose mental experiences, fall greatly below the rigorous standard of the material sciences because the facts from which they start and to which for verification they return are indefeasibly private: in a case of dispute a thought, emotion, or impulse cannot be torn out of the arcanum of a mind and set for common inspection in front of the disputing investigators. And the impossibility of settling questions of value in the way that questions of fact can be settled, the deep and persistent disagreement about them, and that intimate, perhaps essential, connection of values with emotions which makes the impartial study of them supremely difficult, remove the philosophical disciplines (in which clear, systematic, and evidenced knowledge of values is sought) still further from the type of science exemplified most fully in physics. The popular convention which means by a scientific conclusion a conclusion that settles the question arose out of and is relevant to this type only.

Using the term science henceforward to cover this type only, we have to define it and appraise it as clarity, system and public verifiability pursued through centuries

with international co-operation and persisting when all other forms of co-operation have broken down. Its content is so much of knowledge about sensory objects as can at a given time be established and organized with universal agreement. In spirit and content alike it is a spiritual achievement of the first order. Its most obvious glory is the control it gives over natural forces: it has made habitable parts of the earth that formerly were waste or pestilential, made the air and under the sea navigable, enabled us to travel a couple of thousand miles in a day and send a message round the earth in a fraction of a second, mitigated the pains and prolonged the span of man's life, increased the supply of his necessities and invented a host of comforts and entertainments. Yet these applications of scientific knowledge are less remarkable than the knowledge itself, the knowledge that can reach millions of light years into the sky (a single light year is nearly six million million miles) and penetrate to the ultra-microscopic. Most remarkable of all are the rigorous cognitive ideal, the vast imagination, the technical ingenuity, the minute care, the unwearying patience, the superb detachment, the raceless and timeless fellowship of thinking, out of which that knowledge has sprung. The scientific enterprise is exceeding precious, too precious to disparage in the name of anything, even of religion. It is indeed as precious as religion itself, in the sense that it is an equally authentic expression of mind; a source of light and life, and brings healing in its wings. "The world was made," said Sir Thomas Browne, "to be inhabited by beasts, but studied and contemplated by man: 'tis the debt of our reason we owe unto God, and the homage we pay for not being beasts."[1] But this fine saying has reference to theology and philosophy as well

[1] *Religio Medici* (1643), First Part, sec. 13.

as to science in the narrow sense, of which there was little in Browne's day.

Small wonder that the Christian attitude towards science has not been so prevalently negative as it is often represented to be. The very vanguard of science has had in it in every generation men of avowed and sincere religious conviction. In Britain the names of Newton, Priestley, and Faraday at once spring to mind. Those who emphasize the religious resistance to science tend to forget that Copernicus was a canon, Mendel an abbot, and Malthus an Anglican priest. It has been said with forgivable exaggeration—forgivable because provoked—that if science had been left to the "ungodly" it would be much less advanced than it is. As a sublime and sustained effort of the spirit it has been congenial to countless Christians; the universities were opened to it before they were secularized; and the Church corporately and her members severally have repeatedly thanked God for it. When the attitude of the Church towards science has been negative, there have usually been other reasons besides the apparent incompatibility of a given theory with Christian dogma. It is a lack of historical sense that makes us suppose that the ideas of Copernicus and Galileo, for example, should have been as obvious to the older ecclesiastics as they are to us to-day; and the ignorance of the Dark Ages is still often laid entirely at the door of the Church as though little were due to the eastward movement of Greek science, the collapse of Rome, and the dominance of new peoples too barbarian either to desire science or to understand it. Some chapters in the history of the relations between religion and science badly need to be rewritten.

## III

Is the sense of conflict which has developed round these two equally natural expressions of the human spirit, science and religion, justified, and if it is, is it really science, or instead something which the public confuses with science, that is inimical to the religious view of man? For the discussion of this problem the preceding analysis of the nature of science was necessary, to set the stage. We have seen, firstly, how science considered in its broad traditional sense as expert thinking is distinguished from lay or popular thinking; secondly, that within expert thinking there are important differences of kind, based on differences in the kind of evidence admitted; and thirdly, what the defining marks are of that special kind to which within the last hundred years the designation "science" has come to be almost exclusively restricted. The unity of science even in this narrower sense is an ideal not yet even remotely approximated to, and one of the reasons is that not all its forms have reached anything like the same level of certainty and clarity. When we free ourselves from the journalism in which science has become involved we see that in respect of authority its different types have to be considered separately. In scientific circles this is freely, often tartly, recognized: for example, there are physicists, chemists, and statisticians who refuse to regard anything in biology as scientific that is not expressed in precise quantitative terms, and, of course, there are biologists and "behaviourists" who attach no scientific value whatever to introspective psychology. Since, then, by the ethics of controversy, it is right to take a rival theory in its strongest form, I have taken as the scientific doctrine of man that which is found in the physico-chemical and biological sciences.

Is there any conflict between *this* doctrine and the religious doctrine of man?

In treating this question there are several possibilities of procedure. We could take the scientific doctrines one by one and try to pick holes in them. This seems to me to be tactless and fruitless, tactless because the content of the sciences is changing rapidly and also because only a physicist can directly criticize a particular doctrine of physics (and so on), and fruitless because I do not believe that man's true nature and the possibility of God are to be found in the gaps *within* the sciences. It is better to consider the whole *kind* of knowledge exhibited in science, and to ask whether its content, and with this its authority, cover specifically religious matters. The analysis in the preceding section has been badly expressed if it has not shown that that very clarity, system, and cogency which give to science its obvious authority rest entirely on the exclusion from science of any consideration of transcendental entities and of values. It keeps to sensory facts, analogues of sensory facts, mathematics and logic. Why? Firstly because clarity and system are more attainable in a limited and homogeneous field than in an unlimited and heterogeneous one, and secondly because the sensory field lends itself with unique facility to public demonstration. Homogeneity makes possible the standardization of method; sensoriness provides a plain and unescapable point for both the beginning and the end of an inquiry, defining both a patent kind of problem and an irresistible form of solution. It is the consistent acceptance of these limitations that gives science its strength. Whatever falls beyond them is not denied but simply ignored. Science is a technique, and so much knowledge as the following of that technique brings. The religious interpretation of man is simply left out of it as being foreign to its technique.

The scientific and the religious interpretations are reached from distinct viewpoints and by different methods. In principle, they are complementary.

But are they in fact antagonistic? Are their contents incompatible? They certainly have been in the past, but for an unfortunate reason, namely, that religious apologists have included in their interpretation statements the proof or disproof of which is achievable only by scientific methods—for example, that the earth was made in seven days, that it is but six thousand years old, that man's brain is thoroughly different from that of any other known creature, and that the male skeleton lacks the rib which was taken from Adam for the fashioning of Eve. Now the brilliant success of the physico-chemical and biological sciences all but proves that their methods of dealing with their type of subject-matter are the right ones for that type, that is, for whatever is or would under favourable conditions be sensorily perceived. I mean that any question about structures and relations within the sensory order of fact is a scientific question, to be defined and solved by the methods and criteria evolved by the natural sciences, without interference from the side of religious interest even when the question is about something now beyond direct observation, such as the beginning of the earth or the natural factors involved in man's origin and early development. We cannot leave present facts to science and reserve remote ones for theology when both sets of facts are of the same order. Any theorizing about what cannot in fact be perceived involves conjecture, but when the matter is in principle or nature perceptible the conjecture is better, is responsible in the sense that it is open to a generalizable test, when it is guided throughout by what we do perceive. It is by a reasonable extension of this principle that we have come to consider the date and authorship of the

books of the Bible to be questions of scholarship, not of religion, the only objective and co-operative way of investigating them being the one followed in like questions about any other anonymous, pseudonymous, and undated books. A religious man's philology, textual criticism "higher" or "lower," and his natural science, should be the same as anyone else's. But the truth or otherwise of the Bible's transcendental affirmations and of its and your and my spiritual values are extra-scientific matters; and so too are the questions whether the natural process of evolution was initiated and is supported by a cosmic purpose, whether man's mind is simply coeval with his body, and whether his values have any abiding validity. A form of investigation that does not, and cannot without forfeiting its peculiar virtues, study these, cannot pronounce on them.

If this definition of a *meum* and a *tuum* within the general controversy had always been appreciated, we should not have had theologians making *ab extra* judgments on matters that require scientific competence, or, conversely, scientists illicitly lending the prestige of science to opinions about matters which science cannot assimilate to its technique. Much of the overt conflict has consisted in mutual trespass. Science and religion have different fields, or, where they overlap, different tasks. I am not sure that a *direct* contradiction can arise between them.

## IV

But they are not disembodied things. They live in the minds of men, and men *can* contradict one another. The real conflict is between two human attitudes or biases. We may now leave science proper and examine the scientific bias—a mentality, not a doctrine, and therefore difficult to define and argue against, so that in dealing

with it argumentatively I shall at times have to harden it into a doctrine. It is the mentality of the man who has become so habituated to or fascinated by scientific methods and standards that he either refuses altogether to carry the business of thinking beyond the natural sciences, or, if he does, finds himself unable to adapt his way of thinking to the peculiarities of the new subject-matter. The first of these two forms only barely deserves to be mentioned. In the nineteenth century, when scientists were fighting for recognition, it formulated itself in the dogma that the scientific form of knowledge is the only form, everything that cannot fit into it being just unknowable. This agnosticism of the non-perceptual is foolish, because when a man steps out of theory into life he has to repudiate it. In the actual business of living we are unable to treat ideals and value-judgments as mere opinion and all examination of them as idle guesswork. We do and must distinguish between responsible and irresponsible action and thinking upon action, and the only name I can find for apprehension that is more than guessing or private opinion is not ignorance but knowledge. Fortunately, complete agnosticism about everything outside empirical fact has ceased to be fashionable or even respectable.

The second form of the scientific bias is the enduring one. The possessor of it knows he has left science proper behind, that he is transferring its methods to an outer field in which they can never be completely carried out, but he feels that it is better to be imperfectly scientific than to leave the scientific way altogether. The instinct is sound, for we leave that way at our peril, the peril of falling into egoism and *Schwärmerei* (though the best things usually lie in the perilous regions). The result is—when articulated, which is rare—a *philosophy*, which, to avoid coining a word, I shall call naturalism. Its

general content appears to be that the material universe needs nothing but material, at any rate purposeless, factors for its explanation; that man is simply the creature of these factors and is completely destroyed by them; that his values are at best biological conveniences, entirely relative to his time and circumstance; and that every trace of his achievements will one day be annihilated. With such a philosophy no Christian can be friendly. *This* is the so-called science with which religion is and must for ever be in conflict. We must examine its grounds.

The scientist who carries his bias into the larger field tends to deal with the transcendental by the simple process of denying it. The artificially closed system—that is, closed by definition and restriction of method—of his science is now regarded as naturally and finally closed. The reason appears to be a complete satisfaction with the scientific way of explaining phenomena by factors within their own order. He just cannot see that anything else is required for the explanation of, e.g., the astronomical world when its plan has been discovered and shown to follow from the laws of geometry and mechanics: space, time, and energy being what they are, the world could not help being what it is. Since the "secondary" causes account for the facts, the search for "more ultimate" causes is simply not called for. What could cause motion but a force, or rest but forces in equilibrium? The natural order explains itself. Not that every detail has yet made itself clear, but that whatever has revealed its ground has revealed only a natural ground, a ground immanent in its own order and entirely sufficient.

My answer to this will come later. Here I can only note that there is a marked movement away from this attitude among the leaders of physical science, of the science which created it and gave it all its strictest reasons. In other words, the reasons for it are becoming out of

date. The radical re-interpretations effected or required in physics and astronomy by the relativity and quantum theories are bringing about the admission that the strictest scientific explanations are too much infected with arbitrariness and abstractness to be really true, that the very type of explanation is subjective and not merely incomplete. Very oddly, there is in biology an increasing effort to reduce specifically biological laws to the laws of that physics for which diminishing claims are being made.

Another habit which gives a characteristic bias to "scientific" philosophy is the practice of conceiving everything complex as simply the resultant of its elements. If you spend your life analysing, it is natural that you should attribute to the technique a wider applicability, and to its results a greater weight, than they can bear. Here again, however, a reaction is setting in within science itself. In physics the analysis of space into points and of time into instants has given way to the analysis of space-time into point-instants—still analysis, but refusing to go further than a conjunction and thereby repudiating the old principle of analysing until the conceptually simple is reached. In biology the unity of the living organism is being stressed, the effect of the whole on the parts being recognized almost as much as the contribution of the parts to the whole. And in psychology it is being found more fruitful to examine the unitary pattern, the purposive organization, of a piece of experience or behaviour than to follow the old way of analysing a state of mind into sensations, images, meanings and whatnot. In the sphere of specifically human creations the method of analysis is often merely inept, the results being irrelevant or trivial even when they are true. The least illuminating thing you can say about a cathedral is that it consists of pillars, vaulting ribs, and connecting

walls, and these of sandstone, this of quartz, this of silicon and oxygen, and these of protons and electrons. Add even the physical pattern (the statics of it) and you still fail to define the nature of a cathedral; you must bring in the purpose or end of it all. Neither are poems and music understood through analysis into letters and notes; the wholes are prior, in the sense that the elements derive their significance from them, not *vice versa.* Students of language, by the way, generally agree that the sentence is prior to the word, the latter arising out of the decomposition of the former, not the former out of the composition of pre-existent words. Few if any things are understandable as the resultants of their parts. They are more than the stuff they are made of—for the analytic interest all too easily materializes its objects, reducing cathedrals to stone, music to sound, and mind to body or an effluvium of this. Sometimes a misgiving appears, as when it is said that the analysis of matter into points or fields of electro-magnetic force has brought it nearer to mind—as though it were grossness that made matter matter, and thinness that made mind mind. It is pathetic to hear the eager echo in religious circles of this mentalizing of matter by the materialization of mind.

The scientific interest in origins is another habit which becomes a bias when pressed beyond the boundaries of natural science. A genetic inquiry, like an analytic one, may issue in truth without relevance. To assign an origin is often nothing more than to assign an origin; I mean that to answer the question how a thing began may answer no other question. Yet frequently one finds the assumption that it does answer other questions. For instance, I have seen it written that because religion began with fear (a dogmatic premiss) it *is* fear. The principle of this sort of thinking, which is all too rife nowadays, is that a thing is what it sprang from, and if

we accept it here we should accept it elsewhere and hold that an oak *is* an acorn, and man *simply* an animal. It is also written that because religion was spanked into me—against my rule I am straying into psychology—my religion is *based on* fear. The principle here is that the basis of a belief is the emotion or circumstance that first evoked it, which is an elementary confusion between causes and reasons and which, generalized, would compel us to find the basis of nearly all our believings, scientific ones not excepted, in the behests (with their corporal sanctions) of our parents, nurses, and teachers. If religion is fear, science is magic; and spanking has propagated science as well as religion. Arguments that cut both ways are useless. Behind these howlers arising out of an exaggerated emphasis on origins is the more serious confusion of origin with value. If religion began with fear it cannot be true; and if man arose out of a brute stock he cannot have the importance which Christianity claims for him. Here too the inferences are simply *non-sequiturs*. Shakespeare's loftiest utterances all began with his infantile howlings and Rembrandt's etchings with the usual childish scribblings; but these origins tell us nothing about the value of the mature achievements. Similarly, from man's animal origin no conclusion about the value of his ideals can be directly drawn. It must not be forgotten that science in both the individual and the race has had the same lowliness of origin as art, morality and religion and that therefore if the lowliness is relevant to the status of these it is equally relevant to the status of science. But it is relevant to none.

I return, then, to the point that with values scientific thinking is impotent. It is constituted by a technique devised to exclude them, to comprehend a field in which dispassionateness is less difficult and general agreement less slow. It can deal with values only by reducing them

to their factual aspect. There can be a science, a natural science, of morality, but it can only take moral evaluations and conduct as facts, merely classifying and defining them and tracing their physiological and psychological causes and consequences. Similarly a science of religion simply takes religious beliefs, attitudes, rites, and institutions as actual happenings, seeks their common features to reach what is a merely inductive definition, and looks for purely natural causes and effects. Imagine a science of science, in which all the scientific theories of the past and present are treated in the same way—omitting all judgment about which are true and which false and why, defining science merely by that which is common to all the theorizing (true and false alike) surveyed, and "explaining" each theory by the psychological, cultural, and economic conditions out of which it sprang, and you have an instructive parallel to what is meant by a science of morality and of religion. If morality and religion have, as we are often told, in this way been "explained away," reduced to nothing but naturally determined behaviour, the same procedure would explain away science itself. The result—a science exposing the hollowness of the pretensions of any science at all to be true—would be absurd. But there has been no explaining away, for those sciences are called sciences because they have asked and answered a limited set of questions and have eschewed evaluation.

What then are we to make of such expressions as "scientific morality" and "scientific civilization"? Science ignores distinctions of value, but these are the very things that make morality and civilization (and, of course, religion). Strictly, those expressions are contradictions in terms. If we are to attach a coherent meaning to them we can only intend a morality and a civilization that utilize in the pursuit of their ends all the relevant scientific

knowledge available. The science is all in the means, in the steps to be taken to achieve the values under the conditions of cause and effect. In practice, the writer who demands a scientific civilization means one that accepts *his* ends or values, though working towards them with everybody's science. The values come from him as a layman; they have nothing scientific about them; but by calling the whole scheme scientific he tends to mislead the general public. I am not here denying that his values may be right, but simply that they are made right by his science or that they derive any authority from this. For instance, part of one sort of scientific civilization is the eugenic control of procreation and upbringing. If the eugenist's knowledge were much larger and surer than it is at present, he could show us how to produce such and such a type of race, but he has no special fitness for pronouncing any type to be *desirable*. His science, like every other natural science, gives no clue to its right moral application He is, of course, entitled to an opinion on what sort of human stock should be developed and whether marital affection and the family as we now know them should be given up, just as a chemist is entitled to an opinion whether chemistry should be further exploited to make war more effective; but his opinions on these matters are not and cannot be scientific. They are valuations, which he makes not with the authority of a scientist but with the responsibility of a citizen. They are matters which have to be judged with a wider area of reference than biology, by different methods and by different criteria. It was in order to make this position clear that I had to give so wearisome an exposition of the nature of science. Science praises nothing, disparages nothing, values nothing. In its theoretical aspect it is knowledge of facts without reference to its human use; and when this reference is brought in it becomes a knowledge of means

only. The sole legitimate meaning, then, of "scientific civilization" is a civilization which, *whatever its ends or values*, uses in the pursuit of these the knowledge of the interrelations of things which science so abundantly supplies. Given its own ends, a religious civilization may be as scientific as any other.

So far I have tried to define the real nature of the controversy over the scientific and the religious views of man. From an examination of what makes science science I have attempted to show that from its own side science is incompetent to pronounce on religion in so far as religion includes affirmations about transcendental entities and values; also that the speculative extension of science which is sometimes called scientific philosophy cannot, just because it is a speculative extension, claim to retain the authority of science, and that its apparent principles—for example, that the natural can have only a natural explanation, that the nature and value of a thing are revealed in its elementary constituents or its originating circumstances—are too dogmatic and too inapplicable to specifically human achievements to pass as even tolerable philosophical princip es. In all this I have simply been pleading for what seems to me to be an axiomatic position, namely that the total doctrine of reality in general and of man in particular must be reached from and tested by man's total experience. This is not to pit feeling against reason—science includes brute fact as well as reason, and theology reason and fact as well as feeling—but to insist that reason shall operate on all the available data, none of the data being ruled out of court from the start. The scientific bias as I understand it is the tendency to take nothing but our perceptual experience as the determinant of theory, the latter being then not re-tested in but simply imposed on the rest of our experience, this rest being thereby not explained but

explained away. I have to confess that my scientific as well as my religious conscience is disturbed by the sweeping and unverified extension to the distinctively human aspects of mind of principles and theories devised for and only verified in the study of matter. The sub-human is studied with prodigious patience and marvellous competence, the peculiarly human is then impatiently pictured as analogous with or consequential upon it. From physics, chemistry, and biology clouds of matter are trailed into mind, and in the dust we cannot see. Those who, for example, turn physics into philosophy used to conclude to the determinedness of mind from the determinedness of atoms and are at present inferring the freedom of mind from the unpredictability of the behaviour of individual electrons. Presumably mind is not competent to deliver its own evidence about itself; you may make portentous declarations about it without even looking at it; it itself is not to be allowed to suggest the categories, principles and methods by which it should be investigated. The scientific spirit, *when let loose into philosophy*, is not the spirit of open-mindedness. It involves the claim that a stage of maturity has been reached when fidelity to system may override further fidelity to fact; in every extension to a new field it may now predetermine its conclusions by taking as standard the knowledge acquired in the old fields; the ideas and methods which have been vindicated so remarkably in physics and chemistry and biology (many scientists would exclude the last) are *eo ipso* the best for any field whatsoever. Put succinctly, it is the spirit that looks at an electron and then makes a pronouncement on the will of man. The so-called conflict between science and religion is in part between those who approve such procedure and those who find it *intellectually* scandalous.

And yet, these many considerations of *procedure* not-

withstanding, can anything be said about the *content* of the "scientific" philosophy? Is it true that man is nothing but an ephemeral incident on one of the minor planets of a system in an uncounted aggregate of overwhelmingly vaster systems and that he should accordingly take a humble view of his affinities, his values, and his destiny? The most obvious answer is that spatial and temporal smallness need not carry any other kind of smallness with it: the man that knows the stars is "bigger" than they. But I wish to argue the answer that all such naturalism is logically incoherent. My ground is that the only creature that can prove anything cannot prove its own insignificance without depriving the proof of any proof-value. Any radical depreciation of man involves an equally radical depreciation of the scientific thinking which supplies the supposed evidence.

It is obviously pointless and valueless to draw any conclusions at all about man, or anything else, from scientific knowledge unless we claim that this knowledge is true (or probable, for the qualification makes no difference to the argument), and the content of any form of knowledge whatever that claims to be true must be compatible with this claim. Inconsistency here would be a radical inconsistency amounting to absurdity. Now I find this inconsistency in any generalization of the scientific view of man. For instance, anyone who asserts that man is completely determined contradicts himself, for if his assertion is true *it* is determined, and if it is determined it cannot be true, cannot indeed be false, for what is necessitated is simply a happening, like a cough or a sneeze. The old tag that the brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile similarly refutes itself, for then thought would just *be* something, not *know* something else. *Any* doctrine of natural determinism is thus either meaningless or absurd, meaningless if it does not claim to be true,

absurd if it does claim to be true, since its content contradicts the claim made for it. For the determinist has to believe not only that he himself cannot help thinking man is determined but also that those who think man is free cannot help thinking so; indeed, he has to put on the same plane of inevitability all affirmations and negations whatever, the whole medley of thoughts men have ever believed and disbelieved and quarrelled over. With what right he can pick out from this one plane his own thoughts (and only some of these) as alone the true ones is utterly obscure. If all thoughts were necessitated, the distinction of truth and falsity could not arise or be sustained. Take as another example the psycho-analytic doctrine of man. Psycho-analysts regard, and are obliged to do so by their presuppositions, even the most serious thinking as instinctive. But by their argumentation this very statement, the whole of psycho-analytic theory, and all scientific and non-scientific and contradictory statements must be all equally instinctive. And by "instinctive" the psycho-analyst means being determined by hereditary causes. Either, then, the doctrine leaves no room for distinguishing *itself* as true from other expressions of the same or any other instinct, or else the picking out of some only of our instinctive activities as true involves the admission that being instinctively determined or not has nothing to do with their being true or not—an admission which, by the way, would take the bottom out of an all too current inference that religious belief is *not* true *because* it is said to be traceable to instinctive pressure. If thinking were merely instinctive it would be merely a process, a phase in the natural sequence of cause and effect, like an eclipse or an earthquake, nest-building and migration, digestion and pain. To think this and claim truth for the thinking is absurd. Every form of determinism robs all thinking,

therefore its own assertions and any assertions alleged as evidence for these, of any ground for claiming to be true. If, *per impossibile*, we were in fact completely determined, we could never logically believe it. Indeed, there would be no logic.

The argument is not tied to determinism, though every natural science is deterministic except (and perhaps only temporarily) physics. It covers every attempt to envisage human thinking under the category of causality even when the note of necessity is left out of this. Whatever else the natural sciences do, they regard their object as elements or factors within a causal system: of any object they inquire what its causes are and what its effects. Accordingly, when our cognitions are made the object of scientific study they too are looked upon simply as processes, happenings, events. Now happenings simply happen; only assertions about them can be true or false; and when these too are reduced to happenings they lose all assertive, all cognitive, meaning. But every scientist has to assume that his own thinking about his field is more than a mere event or process within that field; he has to believe that it is an event which besides any causal relations it may have to other events has the further relation of apprehending the nature of other events. For this peculiar relation there is no room, no ground of conceivability, in his causal world. His outlook is so completely objective that he always leaves himself out of the world he is studying (even when, as in psychology, this is the world of mind), unconsciously exempting himself from the conditions he finds in or lays down for it. His self-forgetting thinking seeks consistency of content only, of object with object, ignoring the further need for consistency with its claim to be true; and this further consistency cannot be secured so long as the content sets forth man as nothing but a part of the web of cause

and effect. The acid test of any concrete theory of man is that the theorizer should be able to insert his theorizing activity into the world he claims to delineate and explain. By this test naturalism falls, and always must fall; the contradiction is inherent in the very type of thinking naturalism represents. The scientist's world, or any merely naturalistic extension of this, cannot hold a single scientist or a single truth; it has room for nothing but events related spatially, temporally, mathematically, and causally, never cognitively. It is a contradiction to assert both that man is simply a member of a spatio-temporal system, and that the events in his mind that issue in the event of thinking this are true. Take out the "simply" and the contradiction disappears.

To retain, therefore, the distinction of truth and falsity *even for science alone* we have to enlarge the scientific world, and in enlarging it modify it deeply, for what is added is not something of the same order but something different in kind, not having even an analogy with the rest. Knowing, the process that has to other events the unique relation of apprehending them, is above the causal order, in the sense that, although in it, it also knows it. Science as knowing transcends the scientific world; its claim to be true lifts it above the type of order its content depicts. Deny the claim and the content is worthless; admit the claim and the content is set in a larger context. Science can explain things naturally, but never itself. It cannot be true in a purely scientific world.

With all their rigid exclusion of values, then, *from their content*, the natural sciences rest on a value-claim. So does all knowledge. By that claim we rise out of the world of mere cause and effect. Nothing can be true unless this is true. It is the hidden presupposition of all discourse. It is also the minimal and irrefutable ground of the transcendental interpretation of man, the open

gate which can never be closed, so long as we claim to know at all, from the causal to what I can only call the spiritual order. My problem was science and I have kept to it, and shown that in the light of it alone the naturalist philosophy falls. But man is more than a thinker, and if it is a postulate of all discourse that some of his activities have a non-causal character, an undeniable value-aspect, the possibility is vindicated that they may have further values, further transcendent properties, as integral to them as truth is. And finally, the whole reality in which they stand, since it includes beings who can know nothing about it and do scarcely anything in it without postulating the spirituality of their own relation to it, must be interpreted in the light of this remarkable inclusion. What includes man is not a purely causal system; from this man as a valuating being *who cannot deny his values* cannot be derived; therefore the ground and significance of his nature must be a spiritual order, presumably even more dominant, through knowledge and purpose and fiat, over the causal system than man is showing himself to be.

# THE DILEMMA OF HUMANITARIAN MODERNISM

II

*by*

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# THE DILEMMA OF HUMANITARIAN MODERNISM

LET us first define our terms, roughly and concretely, by pointing out the facts to which they refer. Modernism as used here means neither a formal school of thought, nor a vague whole that takes in all civilized life of recent date. It means a particular recurrent mood of temper which in essence is very old, which during the past two hundred years has become more widespread than ever before, but which has never been in any sense universal. Its keynote is active, conscious preoccupation with the present, that is, with affairs in the forefront of one's own time, and comparative disregard for their larger backgrounds. Its disregard extends both to supra-temporal being, the very existence of which it commonly denies, and to the more fateful and tragic aspects of temporality itself. The past, especially the obstinate, urgent past embodied in living tradition, is disparaged; and the incessant sweep of temporal process toward the future is treated as though it were, in all essential respects, compliant to human understanding and control. A tendency to glorify man and his works, though not indeed universal, is typical of the modernistic temper. A strong sense of emancipation pervades it; a sense of having outgrown traditional ideas and obligations by new critical insight. Such insight may issue at the moment in dogmatic rationalism, in positivism, or in scepticism. But in each case, the modernist takes pride in having cut away spiritual bonds which else would hold the present and future to the past. This cutting of bonds affects also group solidarity in the present, and modernism usually tends away from the more exacting kinds of group loyalty toward self-reliant individualism and cosmopolitan toler-

ance. All this converges, for awhile, into an expansive kind of optimism, which may be thought of as modernism in its more naïve, "healthy-minded" phase. Among the most thoughtful modernists, however, scepticism and disillusion grow; and a phase of world-weariness or pessimism sets in, to be succeeded by a new period of more radical dogmatic self-commitments.

Modernism has found voice more than once in Western civilization: for example, in Greek cities of the fifth and early fourth centuries B.C., when the Sophists thrived; in Italian, French, and English cities of the Renaissance, when Ockhamist *moderni* and neo-pagan humanists made common cause against traditionalism; and most widely of all in the cities of Europe, the Americas, and the Antipodes, from the rationalistic-romantic eighteenth century until now. This mood flourishes in urban settings where the tempo of life is quick and artificially portioned out, and the works of man are much in evidence: not ordinarily in rural parts where Nature sets a slower pace, tradition is stubborn, and men are kept in mind of real time, continuous and inexplorable, by the treadmill of the seasons. It follows, moreover, on epochs of swift expansion, when discovery, conquest, and new cultural contacts have stretched old habits of thought and conduct in such wise as to make room for new ones; when expanding trade or improved production has brought new standards of living; and when a "rising class" has made decisive headway against its traditional masters. The actual drive forward is in each case imbued with some strong, impulsive faith, of which the ensuing mood is in part an afterglow. The mood centres, finally, among the beneficiaries rather than the victims of such expansion; among the conquerors, the exploiters, the members of an insurgent class which has successfully consolidated its new gains. In Periclean Athens, at the Renaissance,

and from the French Revolution to the first World War, this has always been the *bourgeoisie*: city-dwelling merchants, bankers, professional people, and other middle-class folk who have gained power at the expense of land-owning aristocracies. Since 1917, spokesmen for the wage-workers have begun for the first time to reach the top. Their fighting creed has been Marxism, and they may be expected to develop a collectivistic, rather than the more individualistic sort of modernism. The latter remains typically a middle-class temper, whose social outlook in our day is apt to be more or less definitely humanitarian but not radical. Genuinely radical thought and behaviour goes better with a driving religious or quasi-religious faith not yet cooled into modernism; such faith as original Christianity or unrevised Marxism involves. Modernists indeed often help to clear the way for a new revolution, by undermining traditional beliefs and *mores*. Further, modernism has in it always the seeds of its own disruption, and in that sense also points beyond itself toward new radical commitments. But its own characteristic habit is moderation, not revolutionism of any sort.

The term humanitarian as used here refers also to a certain social temper. It means, however, not a recurring phase of Western culture, but a perennial attitude which has persisted through many successive cultural phases, and characterized many diverse movements. Its keynote is conscious effort to relieve the suffering and to promote the welfare of less fortunate fellow-men. Its forms are many and its expressions range from calculated beneficence to fervent reforming zeal. The more ardent sort of humanitarianism has often been a factor in radical movements, religious or secular; perhaps even defining at crucial points their objectives and character. But we are concerned with it here in a much less heroic

form. The form of it now most widely associated with modernism is the attitude displayed, typically, by members of a favoured group who are not unwilling, within limits, to champion the cause of those less favoured, and to make some concessions in their behalf. This does not imply readiness to give up one's own basic privileges, nor deliberately to help to displace an existing social order which for the time guarantees them. It does, however, imply awareness of human wants and possibilities outside one's own special group. It implies, moreover, a comparatively high valuation of man and his earthly life, to which religious and ethical insights, intellectual criticism and scientific study, technological advance and many other factors contribute.

In present-day humanitarian modernism this temper has taken a characteristic and, as I shall hold, a very unstable form. For some it has become a religion, "the religion of humanity" in Comte's sense; for others, within and without the churches, a substitute for religion. The former group are, one may suspect, much the less numerous; followers of Comte and other Positivists, members of the various Ethical Societies, certain pragmatists, religious humanists, and other like groups of intellectuals. These are the reflective minority in humanitarian modernism, and in due course we shall examine a contemporary instance of their understanding of man. But by far the greater number who practise, roughly and not too consistently, "the service of man," do little theorizing about it. They are people in and out of the churches whose belief in God and an unseen world has grown dim or quite vanished; but who have a diffuse faith in themselves, their neighbours, and the manifest destiny of some sizeable portion of mankind, and a desire to help make this world a better place. They support the Red Cross, help fill Community Chests and engage in

many sorts of social welfare programmes; vote by millions for Mr. Roosevelt and the New Deal, or, alternatively, for the League and limited sanctions, on behalf of the downtrodden; and in general try to lend a hand toward making life more secure here and now for those who seem to them most obviously in need of help. Their positions are not clearly thought out, and their actions all too often are self-contradictory. But they exemplify well the strength and the weakness of humanitarian modernism.

Its main strength resides, indeed, less in the theories of intellectuals than in the habits of these laymen, who have progressed beyond unquestioning conformity, but not up to the level of sustained, systematic reflection and consistent behaviour. We shall begin our analysis, therefore, with that contemporary modernism which is mainly a fabric of conduct and custom; proceed next to examine a typical modernist theory; and consider finally the bearing of Christian faith upon such ways of life and thought.

## I. UNREFLECTED MODERNISM

(*a*) The more important roots of contemporary modernism are social forces and these may be noted first. Among them is organized Christianity. The social behaviour patterns of the partly Christianized West result from a long interchange of influence among Christian and non-Christian ways of life, which a slowly growing tolerance has permitted to develop side by side. To the rise of present-day modernism Christianity has contributed first through a long and powerful, though by no means a clear and consistent, practical attack on archaic sources of fear and other irrational compulsions to inhumane, destructive behaviour. That institutional Christianity has itself fostered an appalling amount of

"demonry" should not blind one to the fact that its central gospel has been a message of deliverance from all created powers of evil, and that through the darkest ages of Western civilization the Church and its sects have in fact laboured, if often with discouragingly dim vision and dull tools, to bring order out of what they have believed to be demon-inspired chaos. In fighting these unseen devils, they have fought among other evil things the divine pretensions of human tyrants, including many holders of their own high offices. And against such claims to divine right by despots, they have defended the worth of ordinary human persons, with plentiful inconsistency but with recurrent vigour. These influences are among the practical roots of recent modernism.

But the larger part of its derivation is from sources not specifically Christian. In the forefront are applied science and technology, which have exorcized some devils more effectually than could the Church, and have made life in many ways far easier, more various and more secure for the economically fortunate than in any previous age of which we know. At some points, notably in the development of the medical sciences and their application to problems of individual and public health, such improvements have been made available in substantial measure for people of all social groups. Advances like these, even though offset by new perils from machinery in war and in peace, could scarcely have failed to increase confidence in human knowledge and skill.

Modern capitalism, next, has contributed indirectly through its encouragement of technology and of scientific enterprise. Directly, by its achievement of large-scale production of goods through more systematic organization of men and machines, it has added to the sense (albeit a partly illusory sense) of security shared

by the owners of business and industry and members of the "upper middle class" by and large. It is among these groups that modernism has always found most of its exemplars, chiefly in times of relative prosperity and peace after conquest.

The spread of political democracy and of popular education has helped to extend the borders of those groups in Western society whose members are at least nominally, and in part actually, participants in the life of free men. Both these movements have encouraged the growth, among larger numbers of people, of an attitude of self-conscious autonomy. Popular education, moreover, has opened the minds of an unprecedented number to the influence of modernistic ideas and theories, some of which will be noticed in a moment.

Finally a temporary dominance of the white peoples in world trade and politics, made possible mainly by the technological, economic, and political processes just mentioned, has furnished during four hundred years an important part of the framework for the newest modernism. Beginning with discovery of the New World and circumnavigation of the Old, European and American imperialists have felt free to exploit the vast territories thus opened up; and to subjugate, for their own profit, the "backward" (i.e., unmechanized) peoples whose homelands they have invaded. So long as this white dominance continued without serious challenge, even after it had become more obviously an economic compulsion than a high adventure, the sense of power, security, and hope enjoyed by considerable groups in the West was augmented and bulwarked by another factor, pride of race, sustained by what seemed for a time the clearest practical proofs of superiority—military conquest and economic success.

The more theoretical patterns of popular modernism

are complex and none too clear. One major part of these also is derived from Christian tradition. The idea of an orderly universe, and the conception of a moral law implanted in the nature of man, were transmitted from their Greek sources to the modern world by Christian theologians. The four "natural" virtues of Greek moral theory (courage, self-control, wisdom, justice) and three "supernatural" virtues (faith, hope, love) have survived in like manner, as the seven "cardinal virtues" of medieval moralists. In attenuated form, and without the corresponding table of seven deadly sins (headed by pride!), all these persist in modernist ethics to-day. More basically still, the appreciation of man recently in vogue has arisen in a culture long undergirded by Christian belief in man's sonship to God and God's love for man, which set human personality in a perspective unknown, so far as I am aware, to pre-Christian thought. In short, modernist ideology even in its most healthy-minded form is historically unintelligible apart from Christian ethics and dogma.

Yet the prevailing thought-forms of modernism, like its practical behaviour patterns, are derived mainly from other than specifically Christian sources. One of these is the growing popular stock of scientific and near-scientific ideas, particularly such as bear most directly on the nature of man. Garbled but still recognizable versions of the Darwinian theory of human origins and evolution, the Mendelian theory of transmission of characters from parent to offspring and the Freudian theory of individual motivation have become a part of our intellectual climate. These and numerous others influence directly the thinking of many laymen who have some first-hand acquaintance with them, through reading or radio addresses or museum displays or other public education programmes. They influence indirectly a

very much larger number, through infiltration into popular journalism, fiction, propaganda, and political debate, often as unexamined presuppositions. Not only do they provide detailed categories for popular thought about man, but their dissemination has helped to develop a general enthusiasm for "science," most often thought of, one must suspect, as a wonderful device for securing human ends rather than as an austere quest for truth. This tendency to glorify "science" is apt to issue in a romantic naturalism, in which Nature (both human and extra-human) is vaguely thought of as genial and complaisant to the well-being of men.

Two other convictions, more definitely philosophic in origin, are current likewise. One springs from "the idea of progress," developed since the Renaissance: the conviction, articulate or not, that we live in an open world whose future will be indefinitely better than its past, and that so long as the earth continues habitable, the way is clear for advance through steadily growing and essentially adequate human competence. The other springs in part from the ethic of Utilitarianism, though it finds a ready ally also in easy-going common sense. To many who have never heard the word Utilitarianism in its technical meaning, "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" seems a sensible and usable formulation of an ethical goal to which all decent folk can subscribe. It must be construed, no doubt, in conformity with another half thought-out notion derived from popular science: "the survival of the fittest," among whom oneself and one's own group, nation, race—economic class—naturally belong. The upshot is that concern for one's neighbours is acknowledged within limits to have a claim upon one's conduct as a member of a human community. This is in general the outlook described above as humanitarian. It associates itself, easily as we have seen, with

" the religion of humanity" in which mankind is presented as a modern substitute for God.

(*b*) The understanding of man which prevails among unreflective modernists is displayed primarily in practical behaviour, not in theoretic formulations. The behaviour in question, moreover, is not self-consistent, but such as to suggest that contradictory estimates of man are operating side by side in the conduct of both individuals and groups. These estimates relate to man as animal, as social being, and as person.

Man as animal is thought of more or less uncritically, in lay circles, as at once a child of nature and its destined lord. In contrast to the traditional view of man as sprung directly from a supernatural source, the tendency now current among modernist laymen is to think of man as part and parcel of the natural order, arisen in the midst of it, not come down into it from above. Man thus viewed is not "the *débris* of an Adam" created in the image of God and fallen into ruin, but the hero of a long upward climb which is still going on. The evolution which has exalted him above the plants and simpler animals and put all things under his feet is thought of usually in the simple, dramatic terms of struggle for existence and survival of the fittest. The word "fittest" carries, for the layman, a moral connotation that is foreign to strict biological theory but almost unavoidable in popular discourse. It seems to him to follow, then, directly from the "laws" of organic evolution that mankind, and more particularly his own group among men, has proved title to whatever eminence it now holds, and a clear right to any further gains it may be able to achieve. These convictions take practical shape in the serious cultivation of bodily health, mental self-improvement, and practice of the strenuous life in many forms. The more aggressive virtues tend to be exalted above those which have less

obvious competitive value. Not only is success measured in terms of prestige, but a new sort of justification for this ancient prejudice is now read off directly from the nature of animal life itself.

But if modern man thinks of himself as a child of nature, and finds his right in its laws, he thinks of himself also as its master, potentially and in large part actually. Francis Bacon's word, "Knowledge is power," fits the modernist mood in our day as well as at the Renaissance; with the difference that we now have accessible an immensely greater body of systematized knowledge, and the concrete results of its application. If some find these results not fundamentally reassuring, the unreflective modernist is not of their number. To him the ultimate ascendancy of that part of mankind with which he identifies himself seems assured.

What this part is, is determined mainly by the culture in which he has grown up. Just as man the animal is a child of nature, so man the social being comes to birth and is nurtured within a folk or community which is at once his home for life and, in a quite literal sense, the parent for and against whose authority he must exert his own will if he is to become a mature self. Loyalty to the social order in which one is born and reared may take either a mainly emotional or a critical intellectualized form. The investment of civic status with emotion-stirring religious sanctions is as old, presumably as civilization. It wanes as rationalism grows, but when human reason suffers temporary bankruptcy, as may happen under the stresses of unrelieved misfortune, folk-worship is apt to be revived with devastating force. The social loyalty of modernists, needless to say, is normally of the more critical type. Their membership in a community and their sharing of its folkways are tempered by recognition that folkways change, and persuasion that they

can and should be changed for the better, through the efforts of individuals and groups within society. Accordingly, they have supported major reform movements against chattel slavery, cruel treatment of criminals and of psychopathic patients, political tyranny, economic inequity, and war. Patriotism means for them, except when they are carried away by social pressure, a discriminating loyalty which expects the future to be better than the past. They are distinctly more at home in the atmosphere of rational discussion and adjustment than when the gales of archaic passion are rising.

Their loyalty is directed perhaps most characteristically toward human beings as persons, who are felt to be of intrinsic worth, in some sense ends in themselves. As Kant used this phrase, it signalized his reasoned conviction that man's essential being is supra-temporal. In modernist hands, it has become a way of voicing a practical concern for man's present and future well-being within the time order. This concern gets expression, on the one hand, in philanthropic activities which seek amelioration of life for the less favoured among the present generation. Such activities are the outcome, needless to say, of very mixed motives, some merely habitual, some prudential, some still more crudely egoistic. There is no way of measuring the proportion in which genuine concern for the less fortunate just because they are human persons, and therefore deserve a chance to live normally, is present. In some instances it may be a considerable factor, in others a very small factor indeed. But where present at all—and my impression is that by and large it is by no means negligible—it involves in so far a high practical valuation of man.

An especially notable modern tendency is the concentration of effort on the welfare of children and youth; in essence an attempt to insure human well-being in the

future which shall surpass that of the present and past. Again motives are mixed, but at least some of the behaviour which results is unmistakable in its intent. Thus, there is growing advocacy and practice of birth control among thoughtful people who do not shirk parenthood, but who seek to provide for their children as good a chance as possible for healthy life before and after birth. A dominant note in the vigorous modernist movements for educational reform has been stress on the need for "child-centred" rather than book-centred schools, and for the extension of opportunities for learning to all children and youth who can profit by them, with special provision for those who are "backward" or subnormal. This note is echoed in the familiar present stress laid both by parents and by others upon adult responsibility to children and youth, reversing the long dominant patriarchal emphasis of children's responsibility to their elders. The very excesses to which these recent tendencies have been carried serve to underscore the point of chief interest here: the widespread eagerness to provide for a better future, which children and children's children, not men and women of the present, are to enjoy. However utopian, nay illusory, such eagerness may seem, in the light of ominous present realities, and however defective may be its chosen methods, it embodies an authentic and valuable kind of self-transcendence. In its exaltation of personality, and its effort to adapt institutional patterns to human needs, modernism makes its closest approach to Christian faith. Its mistake is in taking human persons as ultimate.

## 2. PRAGMATISM AS AN EXAMPLE OF MODERNISTIC PHILOSOPHY

Among the reflective minority of modernists, philosophic labels and emphases differ considerably. Perhaps the

keenest of all become sceptics or pessimists who exemplify modernist thinking in process of dissolution before the onset of a new dogmatism. Among the rest, for whom modernism is still unspoiled, certain common tendencies of thought are easily recognized. The most obvious is a strong tendency to seek principles of explanation within, rather than beyond, what is empirically given. This means preference for monism rather than dualism, immanentism rather than in belief in transcendent reality, optimism or meliorism instead of pessimism, gnostic assurance rather than doubt-harrowed faith. Such thought usually takes one of three main directions: metaphysical idealism of an over-simplified sort which minimizes the tragedy of existence; romantic naturalism; and positivism or "radical empiricism" which oscillates between naturalistic and humanistic poles. Pragmatism is a form of this third alternative, developed mainly in the United States. Its founders and framers include, in America, the logician Charles Peirce, the psychologist William James, the social philosopher George Mead, and the educator John Dewey; and its proponents now number a vigorous company of younger men all over this country, both in the field of philosophy and in the related fields of education and the social studies.

(*a*) As the name suggests, instrumentalism or pragmatism claims affinity with the life of action, and disparages the looker-on. *Homo faber* is its hero, and "learning by doing" one of its watchwords. Traditional philosophy, it holds, has been mostly pretentions mythology, laying claim to knowledge value which it has not possessed. The genuine philosopher must take his cue from the common sense of men who get work done, instead of pretending to think high thoughts. Pragmatism professes to align itself, in short, with homespun practical activity as against abstract theory and wishful fancy, and for progressive

experimentation as against rehearsal of sacrosanct tradition.

Among the philosophic theories in the text-books, there are several with which pragmatism has obvious affinity. It shares the anti-metaphysical bias and the social emphasis of Comtean positivism, and the ethical temper of English Utilitarian thought. Herbert Spencer's combination of these tendencies with evolutionism produced what may be the nearest European analogue to American pragmatism, but he did not share the distinctive pragmatic conception of truth as successful action. Hegelian idealism was Dewey's point of departure, and from it he set out—somewhat as Marx did—to find a more concrete programme for action, without losing the sense of a fluid wholeness of all things which Hegel's system so vividly conveys. Marxism itself, as American interpreters are making plain, has a family likeness to pragmatism in that both are activist philosophies of strongly monistic temper; though Marxism has a drastic sense of reality which pragmatism often does not display. Finally, the current tendency to "existential thinking" with its clear-cut stress on decision or act as indispensable to knowing, repeats in another key the pragmatic insistence that thinking is integral to action. But all these are, in the main, analogies to rather than sources of pragmatism, which is itself a fresh movement, a living gospel, rather than a systematic philosophy in the classical sense.

More properly to be accounted sources of this movement are certain nineteenth century trends in biology and psychology. The more exact physical sciences, and especially the mathematical disciplines which define their basic outlook, have never figured much in pragmatist thought. Neither have the recent applications of mathematical analysis in biochemistry, biophysics, and genetics, nor the recent studies of behaviour in terms of conditioned

reflexes (a fresh version of associationism). The more precise kinds of analysis and the more atomistic conceptions of reality are out of key with the genius of pragmatism. On the other hand, the importance of Darwinian biology and functional psychology for its development can hardly be overstated. To pragmatists, both these movements have seemed to break away, in the name of science itself, from the outgrown notions of fixed forms and logical or mechanical determinateness; and to lay primary stress on process, fluid development, novelty, concrete becoming. Both, moreover, have conspired to make thinking itself appear in a new light: as a process primarily instrumental to the survival of a growing organism or an evolving species, in interaction with a variable environment. "The influence of Darwin on philosophy" has been felt at many points but nowhere more obviously nor more fundamentally than in the rise of American pragmatism.

A still more concrete source of the movement is the half ideal, half actual fabric of American democracy and educational reform. The temper of pragmatism, indeed, cannot be understood at all without reference to what has been called "the American dream"—the hope for a commonwealth of individual freemen. As interpreted by Dewey and Mead, a democratic order is one in which the individual lives and has his being wholly within the community, while the community is constituted and moulded by the living of its individual members. In this view economic and political liberalism combine with vigorous, though mostly conventional, moral idealism and social meliorism.

Closely related to this interest in a democratic commonwealth is a characteristic, determining interest in educational aims and procedures. The catch-phrase: "Education for democracy, and democracy in education," gives voice to a central aim of the pragmatic movement.

Indeed, the movement in its present phase might be regarded, not unjustly, as concerned above all with the practical task of inducting children and young people into a better and better corporate life. John Dewey, who has dominated the movement since James's death, is first of all an educator, of originality, boldness, and persuasive power. His thought presupposes the nineteenth-century development of sense realism in educational theory, and carries much further its stress on manipulative behaviour and, more generally, on activity in contrast to receptivity. Far more than the older education, it exalts the educative value of actual participation in social enterprises, both in the schoolroom and out of it. From beginning to end, the learning process is conceived and practised as a social adventure, part and parcel of the whole life of the community and of mankind.

The theory of pragmatism, thus rooted, may be characterized roughly by reference to three major tenets.

(*i*) First and most basic is a distinctive theory of knowledge, to which "experimental logic" is the key. All genuine thinking is a grapple with concrete problems, which arise as obstacles to action. Concepts and judgments are plans of attack on such obstacles, nascent movements to free the temporarily impeded drive toward desired objectives The "meaning" of a concept and the "truth" of a judgment can be significantly defined only within the limits of such experimental behaviour, actual or possible. A concept always "means" some experienceable datum toward which (or away from which) it serves to direct the activity of the questing organism. It never "means" some extra-experimental reality. A judgment is "true" when, and just in so far as, the overt activity in which it issues is successful in surmounting the obstacle and achieving the desired experience. Such practical verification *is* truth, which is always relative to a particular

concrete situation, and always a practical characteristic of behaviour, rather than an abstract, theoretic character of "pure thought."

This tenet is so fundamental as to deserve some further comment. Obviously it involves high valuation of sense experience and manipulative activity. Hence the familiar labels "experimentalism" and "operational philosophy." It is not merely sense empiricism, nor physical behaviourism, but it has close affinity with both. Abstract logic, contemplative intuition and the forms or essences usually claimed as their objects, are disparaged by pragmatists, as in no proper and distinctive sense modes of cognition. Likewise, belief which affirms the existence or predicates a given character, of some supposed reality outside the range of what can be experienced, is rejected as unverifiable and meaningless. It is usual among pragmatists to speak of their theory of knowledge as scientific, in contrast to what they regard as empty speculative flights of the classical philosophies. They even equate their theory, often enough, with "the scientific method," which alone can provide significant knowledge of (i.e. practically testable and exploitable adjustment within) the realm of experience. By "the scientific method," however, they usually mean something much more like the rough and ready experimentalism of common sense than like the precise analytic, deductive procedure eulogized by Descartes, and practised by leaders in the more exact sciences, from Galileo to Weyl and Schrödinger, as an indispensable part of the intricate techniques which they know as scientific method. The desire of pragmatism to be scientific, and at the same time to employ concrete rather than abstract procedures, leads directly to the disparagement of both formal logic and faith referred to above.

(*ii*) A second major tenet is lively confidence in man

as arbiter of his own destiny. Pessimistic views of mankind, whether the logical, materialistic, or sceptical, are rejected, and "the idea of progress" strongly championed. Man is thought able to change both his environment and himself, beyond any specifiable limit, so as to resolve frustrations that block, for a time, the free run of instinctive and habitual behaviour. This is the work of "creative intelligence," which acts in the experimental manner just discussed, and which can be developed by proper education to levels as yet unachieved. Such education must be at once intellectual and moral, individual and social, conducted wholly within the concrete flow of "experience." Whether human experience is itself the whole of reality, or whether it involves interaction between human beings and an environment larger than all that they directly experience at any time, is a question with which Dewey's following, in particular, has never clearly come to grips. Dewey himself has written now in the vein of subjectivism, now in that of a somewhat vague realism. But in any event, there is no ambiguity about his confidence in man.

(*iii*) A third characteristic of pragmatism goes with this vagueness about external reality: a strong bias toward metaphysical simplicity. Its preference, indeed, would be not to bother with metaphysical problems at all. But since this sort of issue cannot be wholly avoided, the alternative is chosen which *prima facie* is the simplest possible, a one-storey metaphysic in which everything is treated as some variant of an epicene stuff called "pure experience." Dualisms of subject and object, mind and body, value and fact, God and the world, are smoothed out or entirely discarded. There is especially vehement and sustained polemic against what is called, somewhat loosely, "the supernatural." This may mean a transcendent God, timeless forms, or noumenal minds, souls, or spirits. Traditional theology is condemned as irrational,

unscientific, and anti-social, somewhat in the tone o familiar Marxist discourse on "the opium of the people." But whereas Marxism rejects all religion, including the religious attitude as such, pragmatic humanists are more likely to reject only that sort of religion which points beyond nature to God. The religious attitude, conceived as devotion to whatever within nature (including man) works most strongly for the increase of human welfare, they warmly affirm.

"Pure experience," then, is a universal matrix, coextensive with nature or reality, within which all particulars arise and pass away. It is described as though having at once the vivid concreteness of individual experiences and the generality of a public environment; everywhere fluent, and in the fullest sense continuous. In the midst of it the human race arises, without break of any kind, and within the race individuals, each fully continuous with his cultural and physical *milieu*. All is in flux. *Physis*, not *ousia*, is the universal reality. The notion of substance is discarded, as a vestige of outgrown scholastic metaphysics. Fixed forms—even logical or mathematical forms—are acknowledged only as methodological fictions or instrumental concepts which, if taken as referring to permanent objective entities, become a fruitful source of illusion. There are, indeed, relatively long-enduring arrangements in the flux of experience, but no unchanging forms anywhere. Ideals of all sorts arise in the stream, are part of it, and having served their turns as plans of action, pass on with all else that perpetually perishes. The present is the only locus of actuality; a better future, imaginable now, the only proper goal of knowledge and action. Except as transcribed into present experience, and continually modified into an ever-new present, the past is null. Eternity is a meaningless word.

(*b*) Man like everything else is a part of this flux. In the

course of organic evolution, man the animal emerges in essentially the same way as any other species. This is simply accepted as a fact, not explained, nor discussed in detail. Like other animals, men respond to environmental stimuli in various instinctive ways, driven by natural hungers. In the process, both the environment and the human organisms are changed. The environment is used and made more useful; while within human organisms, adaptive behaviour brings about the growth of habit-systems in which man's responses are schematized, and gain in ease and precision. Thus far we are concerned with the "biologic individual," in the midst of a biologic social group.

Among the habits which men, and many other animals, develop are more or less complicated habits of gesturing, and signalling, by cries, grimaces, and other movements. It is decisive for man's development that the signals which he exchanges with his fellows do not remain mere gestures or signs, but become true symbols, to which the one who initiates them and the one to whom they are addressed may respond in essentially the same way. The snarl of an angry dog will guide the behaviour of his intended victim, but not in the same way his own. He reacts to the behaviour of the other dog, not to his own. Or at least not in the same way. He is not, for example, frightened by his own growl. But the word spoken by a human animal, able to become a human self, serves not merely to guide his neighbour's reactions but to shape his own also. He responds internally to his own gesture, as his neighbour is to respond to it overtly; thus himself "taking the rôle of the other" in the course of his own symbolic behaviour. The "meaning" of any such gesture is simply the acts or portions of acts which it serves to stimulate; and when these responses are prompted not only in one party to the gesture but in both, the gesture becomes not

merely a signal but a symbol. In such intercourse, the meanings of words and other gestures become "internalized" in the individuals who employ them, and these individuals become selves, *personae*, performers of rôles; in short, human persons. For what we mean by a person is precisely one who is able to "put himself in the place of another."

Within the complete stimulus-response cycle which we call an act, a subjective or private moment thus becomes distinguishable from the objective or public moment of overt action. The subjective moment is the relatively inchoate, incipient phase of readiness and of nascent activity which issues in the completed, eventually objective action. Subjectively, the individual "knows what he is about to do," in the sense that through "internalized" symbolic stimuli the projected action, though still future, controls his present behaviour. He takes now, anticipatorily, the rôle of the one (viz. himself) who will shortly perform the action, and in some measure also the rôles of those who will respond to it. But this is to be *conscious*, to have mind, to be a self. And the group within which behaviour of this sort has emerged is no longer a merely biologic, but a human social group, made up of persons or selves, who come to be and have their being only within such a group.

Their intelligence, further, is creative at the level of human intercourse, in the sense that it makes possible intentional modifications both of one's environment and of one's own behaviour patterns. The animal modifies its environment, but not with deliberate foresight; and its own behaviour patterns are relatively fixed in instinctive chains and habit-systems. Man can change both environment and self with deliberate intent. The plans which guide such intended change are called concepts or ideals; and they are controlled by experienced

values, i.e. those characteristics of objects which satisfy human interests. In each human group, the moral task of each self is to realize progressively in successive concrete situations the utmost attainable range and sum of values. This involves that each self must take, subjectively, the rôles of other selves, and identify himself overtly with those processes of change which make toward the harmonization of many interests, of many persons. The goal is progressive achievement of socially conditioned satisfactions for as many of these as possible.

In this continuing moral campaign for the good life, particular objectives may be thought of as moments of aesthetic satisfaction. Such moments are lulls in the strenuous quest, when competing interests are momentarily harmonized in the presence of some inclusive systems of values or satisfactions, and the seeker enjoys a temporary "consummation." Like every other finite experience, this sort of interlude is wholly within the stream of natural events. The refreshment which it provides can be accounted for as the outcome of an orderly release of energies, a resolution of tensions within the organism. It leads on into further vital activity, and the achievement of further advances in the pursuit of individual and social satisfactions.

The rôle of creative intelligence is kept to the fore. By selection and manipulation, each man determines which parts of his environment shall condition most directly his behaviour, which is to say that he himself continuously "creates" his own "effective environment." Yet in the long run it is true, and now and again deserves recognition, that this is possible only because in the total environment of each person there are sources of satisfaction which can be selected, and processes other than his own efforts through which such values are being realized. These value-making processes also are wholly

within the natural order. Indeed, for most practical purposes, one may say they are wholly within the range of human social living. To these, and to the furtherance of their working, in the transformation of imagined or ideal into actual values, each man owes allegiance; all the more when practice of such allegiance is costly to himself. Such devotion not to some illusory transcendent deity, but to the concrete social and other natural values, and value-achieving processes, constitutes the religious attitude, the only one which, for a convinced pragmatic humanist, is valid.

### 3. CHRISTIAN FAITH AND HUMANITARIAN MODERNISM

To pass from such high-minded naturalism to the Christian understanding of man is to move into additional dimensions of belief. Much in what is affirmed by pragmatism, and by the unreflective modernism to which it gives one sort of voice, can be affirmed also by a contemporary Christian, sometimes in frank divergence from views often maintained hitherto in the name of Christianity. But such affirmations, when set in the frame of Christian faith, take on meanings beyond any for which naturalism has room. Moreover, at certain points the affirmations of Christian faith contradict both assertions and denials of naturalistic and humanistic modernism. Christian faith rejects the view that nature is ultimate; that man is self-sufficient; that culture is the supreme object of loyalty, and the ground of human salvation. It rejects with equal stubbornness the humanism which makes a god of human personality, and the inhumane primitivism which holds it in contempt.

The base line upon which all these agreements and differences converge is the boundary between ways of life and thought which lay primary stress upon things

that are seen, and those which lay primary stress upon things that are not seen. Modernism of all varieties belongs to the first class, Christianity to the second. For modernism, the centre of gravity for human life and thought is wholly within the range of human experience; for Christianity it is outside that range, though crucially related to it.

This basic distinction has many particular aspects. Thus, in its theory of knowledge modernism tends to positivism and gnosticism, Christianity to faith-realism. The one contents itself with the panorama of current events, and speaks or acts as though in knowing these, one can know all that is of importance for human life. The other affirms that even if all phenomena were known by man, and nothing beyond these, what is most important of all would remain unknown; and further, that this most important Reality can never be fully known by man, as one knows a colour or a pain, but partially at best, by faith, or by reason continuously grounded in an act of faith. Modernism tends to narrow men's attention to the immediate present and proximate future. Christianity tries to keep men aware of all history as a living movement in time, which at every moment points beyond itself to what is eternal, and has its significance fundamentally in that relationship. Modernism regards nature as ultimate and self-explanatory; human culture and personality as given natural facts. Christianity declares that nature, culture, and personality are problems, not solutions; and that all of them must find theoretic and practical solution if at all, through faith in a sovereign God.

The essential difference between Christian faith and modernism, whether inside or outside the nominally Christian churches and sects, is a difference of actual perspective or orientation. This difference is decisive, and irreconcilable except through essential change in one

or the other. But it should not require anathemas nor bloodless wars of extermination from either side. In detailed content and aims, they have much ground for common understanding, and much to learn from each other. What was true of Christianity with respect to Greek philosophy, and with respect to Avicennism, is true of Christianity with respect to the modernism of our day. We are called on to find once more, without compromising the Christian perspective, a way both to learn from high-minded non-Christians, and to confront them with a reasoned faith in which their own best insights and impulses may find more room than modernism as such can provide. This means, in the first place, ungrudging acknowledgment of the positive gains for human life which modernism has fostered. It must be said by Christian thinkers in the most forthright manner that the explicit turning of men's attention from ultimate to proximate aspects of reality, in the manner of the special sciences, is one indispensable factor in man's laborious quest after truth and enlightened living. When concern with first and final causes crowds out due attention to particular details, our whole outlook is falsified. Faith in God cannot take the place of patient search for understanding of nature and man, nor of painstaking technical procedures through which detailed knowledge is put to work. Science and technology are certainly not enough, but they are indispensable: and hitherto modernism, not traditional Christianity, has most candidly welcomed them. On the side of theory, moreover, the pragmatic insistence on the inseparability of thinking and experimental living is a wholesome, though an exaggerated and confused, protest against the academic character of much philosophy, and of much Christian theology. It is a protest paralleled, in the very different key of faith-realism, by well-known proponents of "exis-

tential thinking." Their way of treating the factor of *decision* in knowing is more congenial to Christian faith than the way of pragmatism, which is too fluent and positivistic, but the latter has at least the merit of underlining a real defect in abstract speculation—its loss of contact with actuality.

At the same time, while giving full credit for sound emphasis in modernism, it must be said no less plainly that its purview is too narrow and its perspective false. This is true both of frankly non-Christian thought, and of these forms of liberalism and of "the social gospel" within the churches which identify the Kingdom of God with a cultural ideal or an improved social order. In trying to be realistic about religious tradition, modernism becomes unrealistic about man. It sees him predominantly if not exclusively as a "cultured" being, able to live his life fully within the more decorous precincts of current civilization, which collectively are often romanticized into a genial sort of *Magna Mater*. It tends to forget, in spite of verbal denials, that culture no more than nature is unambiguously good, either actually or potentially; and that even less than nature can it lay claim to ultimateness of being. Culture is itself floated on human cravings, aspirations, and habits which emerge from nature, in response to stimuli partly natural, partly cultural, and partly (in the case of logical and ethical norms, at least) supernatural and supra-cultural. Man cannot live by culture alone. His fierce, deep-seated drives require at once more ample scope and more powerful discipline than culture by itself can provide. This Christian faith sees far more clearly than modernism, and by so much is more realistic about man. It sees him as at once less admirable in his present actuality, and more profound in his ultimate significance, than modernism takes him to be.

First of all, man the animal is, for Christian faith, a creature responsible to his Creator. This is not a contradiction but a deepening of one view by another. Man *is* an animal. So far as the tested findings of biologists and psychologists go, concerning the observable phenomena of human origins, behaviour, and development, taken as phenomena subject to further interpretation, Christian faith has no tenable ground for dissent. No less than modernism, it will be well advised to learn from the scientists what they have to say about man *wie er geht und steht*, and to demand for them the utmost freedom to prosecute their work in their own way. Censorship of scientific inquiry by political or ecclesiastical pressure should be resented as hotly by Christians as by any modernist. Moreover, disparagement of what scientists have to say about man within the range of their special competence, as though it added nothing of real importance to our understanding of ourselves, is a "sin against the holy spirit of truth." If in any meaningful sense the heavens declare the glory of God his ways are to be discerned no less definitely in the workings of germ plasm or of reflex arcs, if these are described with comparable clarity and objectivity. This implies that the scientist's findings must be freed from subjection to extraneous coercions, religious or irreligious; and from uncriticized assumptions covertly smuggled in by the scientists themselves. It is with such extra-scientific dogma, not with a clearly delimited biological or psychological theory, however abstract or mechanistic in method, that Christian faith must conflict. As regards modernism, it is at the point of the modernist's tendency to make positivism itself a creed that the Christian understanding of man as animal demands more room, and flatly rejects the modernist dogma.

For man the animal is unable, as plain matter of fact,

to live simply in the present. Perhaps a cow does; we have no way of knowing. But a man does not. He is aware of time, past and future as well as present. He is haunted by norms to which, often in contradiction of present desire, he tries to measure up. His animality is shot through with felt responsibility, and his life is continually in unstable equilibrium, as though its centre of gravity were outside every present moment. To regard such a being as completely describable in terms of phenomena is to miss the most distinctive thing about him: his being haunted by what seems a perpetual summons from beyond every present appearance. To show how one phenomenal segment of his life is connected with other like segments is, we have said, necessary to any extensive understanding of his existence; but such descriptive explanation can never be sufficient. There is needed further an explanation which pierces through the stream of appearances, in act rather than by observation; which seeks to *enact* with insight and in that sense to understand the more ultimate truth about man. Such enacted understanding is the Christan belief that man, this animal, is a responsible creature dependent for his being and his worth upon God. In response to God's creative word he has emerged from the stream of organic evolution, with ears partly though imperfectly attuned to God's continuing summons, which will not let him rest. That summons is partly conveyed, though by no means automatically interpreted, through the processes that go on within man, and in nature around him; which have their ultimate meaning not simply as being themselves, but as being vehicles for the divine word to which man is not merely subjected but *responsible*, having therein his distinctive status as man.

A corresponding difference of perspective sets off the Christian belief about man as social being. Modernism tends to deal with culture and with history in the same

manner as with physical nature, regarding it as self-explanatory, and a sufficient frame of reference for the behaviour of human persons. It is significant and typical that Professor Mead who has given more than usually close attention to the emergence of human selves, is baffled by the problem whether self or society is prior, and yet is not embarrassed by that fact—indeed, appears not to notice it. He speaks with equal ease of human selves as able to emerge only within a human society, and of distinctive human society as produced only by human selves. The facts of selfhood and social community are simply accepted as given, and sociological and psychological descriptions or analyses are offered without apparent misgiving as sufficient explanations of the way men live. This applies both to human achievement and to human shortcomings. The former are thought of as born and nourished wholly by an existing culture. In so far as this culture comes to partial self-consciousness, it is able to assume responsibility for directing its own further development through education and other social procedures. Thus only are human achievements effected and improvements made, and only within this context do ideals have any status. Human shortcomings, on the other hand, are attributed simply to individual ineptitudes and to cultural lag, both of which are regrettable, but definitely remediable by rightly directed human efforts. "Creative intelligence," in short, is the sufficient key to human reformation as well as to control of physical nature. The criteria for such improvement also are to be found wholly within the range of social experience, in terms of the harmonizing of human desires and their satisfactions. Perfect permanent harmony is not to be expected, but progressive harmonization is at once desirable and feasible: the true goal of intelligent moral effort.

Modern Elijahs, very jealous for the God of hosts, are apt to make again Elijah's mistake and suppose that to be Christian must mean to reject all this with execration. The truth is, I think, that as regards detailed insights, hopes and social ideals, the greater part of humanitarian modernism at its best should be cherished by contemporary Christians, without conceding its ultimate perspective. In spite of the closest agreement in detail, which should be cultivated and not denied, there must remain a profound divergence of meaning, or ultimate reference, that pervades all the details of these respective ways of life. For modernism, human society is ultimate and human ills are curable by it. For Christian faith, man is not simply the more or less inept child of a culture. He is that, no doubt. But far more ominously he is, individually and collectively, a sinner against the eternal word of God. The frame of reference for his conduct is not merely the behaviour patterns of an existing culture, but the fabric of a world order in which all cultures are grounded, and which is itself continuously moulded by God's will. Against this fabric not only individuals and groups, but whole cultures stand under judgment, and in so far as they fail grossly to meet its demands, whether by overt rebellion or merely through inertia, they die.

The requirement which thus lies upon men is not simply the constraint of stubborn facts, but the obligation implicit in worth and in the liability of persons to its claims. Such obligation differs from factual compulsion (from which it is, of course, never entirely separate) in that the response for which it calls is not a forced surrender but a voluntary devotion, in which the responding self is not constricted but fulfilled, or realized. The summons is, in principle, a demand for willingness to lose one's life for the Kingdom of God, and thus to find it. It is a call to the highest good of which man is capable;

to the fulfilment, not the destruction, of his root-nature, and the satisfaction of his most distinctive hungers. For Christian faith, the call to such devotion comes centrally through Jesus Christ, and the voice that speaks most clearly in his life and death is trusted, in Christian living, as the voice of God. To the more superficial, so-called "natural" inclinations of men (including Christians) toward self-indulgence and self-glorification, such a call is either unintelligible or a positive affront, and the usual response is apathy or refusal. This is sin. It is not merely to reject some demand or habit pattern of society. This, though entitled to its own proper meed of love and devotion, is always partly and in some respects radically of another mind than the mind of Jesus Christ. To sin is not then simply to disobey society but to contradict the will of God, which is the deepest law of man's own being.

The conflicts which arise thence are among the most profound and most destructive with which we have to cope in ourselves. Not merely pain, nor frustration of particular desires, nor collision of individual wills, nor even social conflicts between competing groups. These can be endured, inside fairly wide limits, without essential disintegration of human selves; and within somewhat narrower limits, they can even be regarded as conducive to growth toward maturity. Of the really disruptive processes which break down human selfhood, some are disasters which men suffer but do not cause—deterioration of brain cells, starvation of bodies and minds, overloading of the weak in the natural struggle for existence; but some spring directly from the self-contradiction which is sin—man's vain attempt to deny his own humanity by denying his responsibility to God. Thence arise the destructive tensions within individual selves, whose symptoms are indecision, vacillation, cowardice, anxiety,

and moral anguish; or, still worse, acquired cruelty and brutal callousness. Thence arise also, in large part, the insidious treacheries, prides, and fears which take shape in the oppression of weaker groups by stronger; and as the stress of group conflict increases, issue in the ghastly inhumanities of despotism and war. It is this profound self-contradiction in man, this denial of the responsibility which makes him human, that breaks down selves and societies from within. Natural disasters can be weathered, human struggle endured and turned to account, so long as men are true to themselves by acknowledging claims superior to their own wills. But when irresponsibility becomes the rule, both selves and societies disintegrate.

Such denial is at once an act and a disposition, individual and communal. It is the disposition of every infant, every adult, every social group (including the organized churches and sects), and every culture to affirm its own wants and will as ultimate. It is also each particular decision which expresses and confirms this tendency. Mankind and every human self is "fallen" not from some original perfection (which no creature has ever had), but simply into the plight of selfhood responsible yet not truly responsive to God. This "fall" is at once a rise from and a lapse below animal innocence. Other animals cannot be "daemonic." Men and their cultures not only can, but continually become so in fact. In failing or refusing to acknowledge the sovereignty of God, they deny their own nature as human, and condemn themselves thereby to inner conflict, incurable by anything they themselves can do, which tends continually to their own destruction.

This daemonic tendency in human life modernism can neither understand nor cope with. By its own secularistic optimism, indeed, it helps, quite unintentionally,

to foster both the self-assertiveness and the delusive self-confidence which lead again and again to the savage inhumanities which modernists, like all decent folk, deplore. This indictment rests also, of course, against organized Christendom. Professed Christians of modernistic temper share the tendency to overvalue human culture, and are all too easily sucked in to the defence of their own segment of it against other segments, subordinating the supra-cultural claims of the gospel to the demands of nation, folk, or class. Traditionalistic Christians, in essentially similar fashion, have always been prone to confuse their acknowledged responsibility to God with the right to identify the demands of the actual Church, or some part of it, with the divine will. Entrenchment of vested interests, repression of dissent, and persecutions are the not unnatural outcome; and the peculiar ruthlessness of religious wars bears witness to the liability of Churches of all sorts to daemonic self-exaltation. But in Christian faith, fallible men are continually being confronted anew with the majesty of God which condemns, and the love of God which can destroy, all demonries. In modernism, there is sincere abhorrence of these, but neither clear insight into their nature nor power to nullify their spells. Intelligence and good will are indispensable, but not enough. The enlistment of emotion and the other powerful drives mobilized in a transcendental religious faith is needed also.

In its understanding of man's origin, duty, and present plight, therefore, Christian faith differs crucially from modernism, for all that they have much in common. They diverge, finally, in their understanding of human destiny. For modernism, as we have seen, man's destiny is in his own hands, and his salvation depends finally upon himself. This salvation is conceived in terms of earthly progress, effected through individual learnings

and growth, and social amelioration. The ideal is by no means a vulgar nor a trivial one, though it can easily be cheapened—more easily, perhaps, than the harsh judgments of prophetic religion (though these also are often turned into cloaks for all-too-human arrogance and cruelty). In the modernist ideal of the good life, all that is choice in human culture in the regions of intellect, aesthetic appreciation, moral sensitiveness and vigour, humane love and loyalty has its place. For progressive realization of this ideal, modernism looks to man, to his natural capacities, and the natural and social stimuli which can be made to play upon them. Education, in the broadest and most literal sense, is the way of salvation; the drawing out, in a fluid series of controlled situations, of a more and more effectively selected sum of human responses. Such progress, limited only by the duration of human life on the earth, is the modernist's ruling hope.

Once more Christian faith dissents, not because at particular points this view is bad, but because with all its good it leaves out what is basic to the whole, and thereby falsifies the total perspective. Christian faith denies, first of all, that salvation of any kind is to be had except from God. That men can learn and grow, and that they may well come better to understand and control their natural and cultural environment and themselves, it need not question. But even such learning and growth, it declares, can take place only by the grace of God. Not man but God maintains the equilibria of nature, and the compensatory rhythms of history. Cultures grow and decline not mainly because of what men do, but mainly because of what God does, around men and within them. Apart from his providence, not even the wavering steps we call human progress could be made.

But Christian faith says more: that such progress is

not in itself to be called salvation. What men most deeply need is not bigger and better things, nor even finer and finer individuals and social orders. These certainly, if they can be had, but these will never be enough. What men most deeply need is blessedness, "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding." Whatever the future may hold, some men and women have found here stability and fulness of life with God. But it comes from beyond the here-and-now, to men and women for whom this present has seemed to open, like a glass become translucent, upon incomprehended depths of Being and of Good before which human restlessness is stilled. Not that struggle ceases, nor that sin is cancelled. Man does not become a superman, immune to these things. The point is that somehow, beyond human knowing and doing, peace dawns in the midst of struggle, without in the least annulling its arduousness and pain. A part of the truth is that *meaning* comes into the turmoil, which before it did not have, of a sort which man had neither foreseen nor specifically desired. But more than meaning. There comes conviction of the overshadowing presence of God. Not this or that detail of the present landscape need be changed. Only the whole is made new. The presence of a loved one, or devotion to a new-found cause, may similarly make nothing different and everything new within a limited area, for awhile. The presence of God to those who believe makes a new heaven and a new earth, for life. It should not relax but quicken the struggle for specific human betterments; only the struggle now is lived and seen in the light of eternity. This dimension of Being modernism by itself does not recognize, nor count as a factor for human destiny. To Christian faith, it is the chief thing of all.

Herein is the dilemma of humanitarian modernism: that it condemns its own best impulses to continual

thwarting and recurrent disaster. This is, for Christian faith, a simple variant of the central dilemma of mankind. Man is a problem to himself not chiefly because of his more obvious vices, but because the very strength in him, the better part of his effort and aspiration, so continually goes wrong. That greed and lying should get him into trouble need be no matter for surprise. But that truth-seeking and generosity should betray him is a cruel puzzle. No wonder that in bewilderment men turn again and again from the disappointing ways of genteel culture to the primitive devotions of tribalism, war, and tyranny. But that way madness lies. Inhumanity is no solution for the dilemmas of human living: for men cannot by volition cease to be men, and their efforts to do so aggravate the death-dealing conflicts among them and within them. The only real cure is for them to be made, by the grace of God, not less but more fully humane. Truth-seeking and generosity need more ample room.

# THE MARXIST ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE CHRISTIAN CONCEPTION OF MAN

*by*

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## I. INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS

THE comparison of two such divergent conceptions as the Christian religion on the one hand and the Marxist sociology, which is hostile to religion on the other, is only possible if some common basis can be found. In this article it is held that philosophy provides such a basis: philosophy in the sense of the consummation of knowledge in its rational and conceptual form, in so far as it endeavours to investigate the nature of the objective world—in this particular instance the nature of man. Philosophy therefore investigates the structure of human life, of that which is typically "human," rather than the concrete conditions of human life. It is right, moreover, that the philosophical approach to the problem of man—as well as all the other problems with which the Christian is faced—should be found on the threshold, or so to speak, in the "ante-room" of the Christian religion; such a philosophical approach is also to be found on the threshold of Marxism, if one is to regard the latter as a unique totalitarian conception of life, comprising the unity of Theory and Practice. Only on this "threshold" is it possible to examine the problems of Christianity and Marxism as objects of thought and to compare them. Even the Christian faith, as well as the Marxist view of life (which ultimately is dependent on a belief, no matter whether it is religious or not, or whether it represents some other form of faith) is suprarational and independent of general rational understanding. It is, however, scarcely conceivable that the Marxist and the Christian can understand each other as "believers," that is, in the practical sense; whereas in the philosophical

"ante-room," beyond the considerations of practicality, such a mutual approach is not impossible. It is this which justifies the philosophical form of this paper.

## 2. THE MARXIST AND THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF MAN IN THE LIGHT OF POSSIBLE POINTS OF CONTACT

### A. *The Marxist Conception of Man.*

(a) *The Marxist conception of man is a product of philosophical and theological speculations which originate in the Hegelian school, which for their part are the product of the struggle with Christian faith and Christian theology.*

Anyone who has studied the history of Marxist doctrine is convinced that the deepest philosophical roots of Marxism, and especially of the Marxist anthropology, are to be found in the theological controversies which arose in the Hegelian school after the death of Hegel.

Engels himself has described briefly the history of this philosophical-theological struggle within the Hegelian school.[1] An important episode in this struggle was the birth of the new German atheism. The time came, as Engels said, when the "Hegelian gang" "couldn't go on with the deception" that Christianity was a barrier. "All the fundamental principles of Christianity, even those of what has hitherto been called religion as a whole, have fallen before the remorseless assault of reason; the absolute idea claims to be the foundation of a new era. The great revolution of which the French philosophers of the last century were only the precursors has reached its fulfilment in the realm of thought. Protestant philosophy from Descartes

[1] In an early work: *Schelling und die Offenbarung*, 1842, Marx-Engels, historical-critical edition, publ. Karl Marx Institute, Moscow, hereinafter referred to as ME., I, 2, p. 184.

onwards is finished; a new age has begun. And it is the sacred obligation of everybody who is obedient to the course prescribed by the self-development of his spirit, to translate the stupendous result into the consciousness of the nation, and to erect it into the basic principle of German life."[1]

In this quotation we find the bridge which, in the opinion of Engels, connects the new anti-religious tendencies with Protestantism. Marx was also of the opinion, writing in the *Deutsch-französische Jahrbücher* (1844), that "Germany's revolutionary past" lay in the Reformation. "As the revolution of those days began with a monk, so to-day it must begin in the brain of the philosopher." But, Marx adds, "if Protestantism was not the true solution, it was at any rate a true indication of the task. It was no longer a question of the conflict of the layman with the priest outside himself, but *with his own inner priest* (*mit seinem eigenen inneren Pfaffen*), with his 'clerical' nature."[2] The conflict with his " 'clerical' nature" meant the criticism of the religious consciousness and of religion as such. But in so far as this criticism, in the opinion of the Hegelians, is already achieved in the Hegelian philosophy, and involves the rejection of the religious aspect of this philosophy, the issue is really the banishment from the field of philosophical speculation of the idea of anything above and beyond human nature, of an absolute spirit independent of man, and instead the identification of the Absolute with Man. With the fulfilment of this task Hegelianism changes, of its own accord, into a kind of philosophical anthropology or anthroposophy. The question still remains, however: how is the term "Man" to be understood in this anthropology? We know that Marx' and Engels' contemporaries answered this question in

[1] Loc. cit., p. 185.
[2] ME., I, 1 (2), p. 615.

very different ways. The most famous and influential of them, Feuerbach, understood by "Man" an abstract being, a human genus, the "universal" (*allgemein*) in man. The so-called "Critical Criticism" of Bruno Bauer and those who agreed with him vigorously attacked Feuerbach's abstract conception. They attempted to substitute for his abstract human *Wesen* the concrete human individual. This concrete human individual of the "Critical Criticism" did not appear to the most radical of the Neo-Hegelians, Max Stirner, to be concrete enough. He therefore raised into a philosophical principle his philosophy of the "self" (*Einzigen*), the egotistical individual who, released from all social and moral bonds, appears *in puris naturalibus* (Engels' phrase). In this controversy with its conflicting views of man, Marx and Engels had a peculiar position, for they stood midway between Feuerbach and Stirner. From Feuerbach they took over the thought that the notion "man" was not covered by the idea of the "self alone" (*Einzigen*); Stirner contributed the idea that the elements of struggle and of self-interest could not be dismissed from any conception of man.[1] In Stirner's one-sided egoism Engels finds something which is in principle true, and which communist doctrine cannot but assimilate. "And what is true in it is this: that we will not be impelled to action unless our self-interest is touched; in this sense, therefore, we become Communists by reason of our egoism, and we want to be men out of sheer egoism, apart from any material hopes . . . Stirner is right when he rejects Feuerbach's notion of man, at least the notion embodied in his *Wesen des Christentums*; the Feuerbach type

[1] For the history of this discussion see: D.Koigen: *Zur Vorgeschichte des modernen philosophischen Sozialismus in Deutschland*, Bern, 1901. N. N. Alexeiev: *Die Naturwissenschaften und Sozialwissenschaften*, Moscow, 1911; A. Cornu: *Karl Marx, L'homme et l'Œuvre. De l'Hegelianisme au matérialisme historique*, Paris, 1934.

of man is derived from God, Feuerbach arrives at his concept of man through God, and in this way 'man' is still surrounded by the halo of theological abstraction . . . We have to proceed from empiricism and materialism if we want to be correct in our thinking, and especially in our conception of 'man'; we must deduce the general from the particular, not from itself or from the air, *à la* Hegel. All these are obvious platitudes, and have already been admitted by Feuerbach."[1]

Here is the kernel of the whole approach to the Marxist concept of man, which we shall define more closely in what follows.

(b) *A definitely developed anthropology contradicting the idea of philosophical cosmology constitutes the kernel of the Marxist conception of man.*

The Marxist conception of man was the result of the conflict waged by the young Marx and Engels against the abstract anthropology of their time, as represented by Feuerbach, Bauer, and Stirner. In this controversy Marx and Engels contended that a philosophical anthropology which is concerned only with the "isolated individual," with the "individual man as such," ignoring his relation to other men and to his social environment, is largely erroneous. In this sense, then, the repudiation of such anthropology by Marx is an incontestable fact. The situation, however, changes when we examine Marxism in the light of a philosophical cosmology which seeks to dissolve the concept of man into an aggregate of non-human factors and elements. We then see that early Marxism regarded man, not as an isolated individual but as "man in society," as primary, and was therefore more inclined to be anthropological than cosmological. Marxism can therefore be considered as "anthropological," in the sociological sense of the word.

[1] ME., III, 1, p. 6–7.

One proof of this is that in the early writings of Marx and Engels there is no trace of any tendency to erect nature into something absolute, self-consistent, contrasted with man. On the contrary: nature has here a very original, sociological, and in a certain sense an anthropological meaning. Nature, Marx says, "if taken in the abstract as something entirely apart from man *has no significance for man.*"[1] "The extremely important question of the relation of man to nature, from which all 'works unspeakably sublime' beyond 'substance' and 'self-awareness' proceed, vanishes of its own accord when one realizes that the famous 'unity of man with nature' is as old as industry."[2] Nature, or the visible world immediately surrounding us, is not something "which has suddenly appeared out of eternity, always the same, but is the product of industry and of society." It is "a historical product," the result of the activity of a whole series of generations.[3] One can, of course, speak of the "priority of external nature," but this is not the nature in which we live to-day, and which, when considered in the abstract apart from man, becomes in itself an abstraction.

In other words: if man is a product of nature, nature is also the product of man. When considered from this standpoint the Marxist philosophy is not a materialistic cosmology but an anthropology. That is why Marx defines his philosophical position as a "positive or real humanism." He identifies the terms Materialism, Naturalism, Humanism, and Communism, opposing them to Spiritualism and Idealism. He even says that his own approach to nature is anthropological,[4] which fully substantiates the accuracy of our assertion.

[1] ME., I, 3, 8, 170.
[2] ME., I, 3, p. 170; I, B, 5, p. 33.
[3] Ibid., p. 33.
[4] ME., I, B, 3, p. 122.

(c) *In later developments of the Marxist system the anthropology of the earlier period passes gradually into a naturalistic cosmology, though this has not conspicuously influenced the Marxist concept of man.*

The cosmological attitude of later Marxism is exemplified in what is now called the "dialectic of nature," which is actually a subdivision of the materialist philosophy of evolution in general. Here the concept of man is grounded on a natural science raised to the level of philosophy, and one which claims to have knowledge not only of natural phenomena but of the "thing-in-itself." Engels roundly rejects the position according to which the "thing-in-itself" is unknowable.[1] In this manner the "nature" of the earlier writings ("not an absolute self-sufficient essence (*Wesen*)," "Not a 'substance' ") is transformed into its antithesis: into an "absolute substance." Engels does not repudiate the thought that man is in the position of being able to cause changes within nature, though at the same time he points out that in all nature-changes there remains something permanent, namely, the general conception (*Inbegriff*) of the various forms of physical activity or the interchange of natural powers. That, according to Engels, is actually the conception of "substance" in Spinoza's sense: "Substance" as the *causa sui*.[2] This absolute substance is simply matter in the dialectic sense, not the "matter" of materialism as it is commonly understood. This idea of matter dialectically conceived was foreshadowed in the Greek philosophers in their doctrine of πρῶτη ὕλη. The idea of Chaos in antiquity, Engels says, is to be found again in Laplace, who makes of it a universal formless foundation for the physical world. In this primeval, formless matter there originate, by means of a continuous process of differentiation, all the forms of

[1] See *Dialektik der Natur*, Moscow, 1932, pp. 6–7.
[2] *Dialektik der Natur*, p. 15.

physical existence. In the so-called *Einleitung zur Dialektik der Natur* (1880) we read words which are literally a repetition, in Ernst Haeckel's style, of the current ideas underlying popular naturalistic evolutionism. According to this philosophy man is only the sum of "non-human" substances and purely physical elements; his existence is completely conditioned by the nature of an all-pervading physical substance. Little remains of the anthropology which is expressed, for example, in Engels' famous pamphlet on Ludwig Feuerbach.[1]

All that distinguishes this "dialectic of nature" from the other types of evolutionary thought is what remains of the influence of the Hegelian philosophy. The Marxist dialectic includes three laws describing the historical development of all things: the law of the transformation of quantity into quality, the law of the interpenetration of opposites, and the law of negation. For the understanding of the Marxist theory of development it is the first of these in particular which is important. According to it, development does not consist merely in continuity but presupposes sudden leaps. The principle of continuity is realized only in quantitative changes, whereas the birth of a new quality is always a jump, the creation of something new which is not implied in the lower stages of development. For example: life originates in continuous quantitative changes in dead matter; on reaching a certain level these changes result in a jump forward from the dead to the living, and in this way a new quality is created, namely, the category of life. In the same manner, human life is a sudden leap forward from animal life. We know that the controversy about the essential meaning of these newly created qualities of existence has split Soviet

[1] The last anthropological elements disappear completely in Lenin's exposition of the views of Engels, which we find in the well-known book *Materialismus und Empiriokritizmus*.

philosophy into two groups: the mechanists and the dialecticians. The first group minimizes the significance of the newly emerged qualities; the second accentuates it so much that it succumbs to the two heresies of Vitalism and Idealism.[1] About the year 1930, all such philosophical debates which allow for the possibility of basing a new concept of man on Leninism were forbidden. Stalin himself has assumed the right to solve philosophical problems by decree.

When we consider only these cosmological characteristics of Marxism, we gain the impression that it represents a kind of naturalistic philosophy with a cosmological tinge, and that the Marxist concept of man is incomprehensible without this philosophy. But in so doing, we lose quite half of the Marxist system of thought and, indeed, some of the most important elements in the view of man as taught by Marx and Engels.

(d) *For Marxism the nature of man is in the first place conditioned by human interrelations and by man's place in society, the essence of the latter relationship being not that of existing social forms, because such forms are in themselves contradictory and are responsible for the "divided," "estranged" nature of man.*

That man is essentially a social being, that the individual without society is a pure abstraction, that society alone, not the individual man, constitutes reality—at the beginning of the nineteenth century these and other similar suppositions were no more than commonplaces. When Marx repeats this thesis in his early writings he is only reflecting the spirit of his age. For us it is not the general thesis but the more specific nature of its contents which Marxism has introduced into it which is instructive and important. The unique thing about this "sociological

[1] Cf. the "Transactions of the Second Conference of the Marx-Lenin Scientific Institute," lectures by A. Deborin, Moscow, 1929.

anthropology" in the Marxist sense is that Marx regards the social nature of man, as expressed in existing social forms, as something "incomplete." The real social character of man is not to be sought in contemporary society. For this possesses no solidarity, nor is it organic as the representatives of the various sociological and politico-philosophical theories of the Restoration period understood it to be. All these sociological doctrines are characterized by the tendency to ascribe final and absolute significance to one section of historical reality, to the positive forms of social life and social institutions. Notwithstanding the fact that even Marxism reflects the historical spirit of the period in which Marx lives, this philosophy, more than any of those which have been mentioned, finds such an absolute idealization foreign to its nature. For Marx, every social form is incomplete, primitive communism included; for social perfection lies in the future alone. Marx was a product of the Restoration period, a student of the Hegelian philosophy, from which he evolved the so-called historical spirit; in spite of this, however, and in this he differs from his contemporaries, he breathes a new spirit into the soul of the Restoration, and infuses into it the breath of a new revolution.

Marx opposes the social theories of the Restoration period with his antinomian and dialectical teaching about society. He sees society as a struggle of mutually antagonistic forms of social energy, not as the realization of social harmony and solidarity. From this conception of society there springs not only the idea of the class-war, but also that of the inner contradictions within capitalist society, which he has described in his main work. His marked repudiation of the existing order of society is expressed most conspicuously in the Marxist doctrine of the State; for in his time the State was being increasingly regarded as an absolute. The State, according to Marx, is an

organization for the purpose of class-war and of social exploitation. The impartial regulation and mitigation of social antitheses forms no part of its purpose, therefore it has no social or moral value. Its origin coincides with that of social-economic classes, and it is doomed to disappear completely with the arrival of the future classless society.

For this reason, therefore, "man as a product of existing historical forms" does not provide any adequate conception of the real nature of man; for this "man" is not an organically unified whole, he is divided, or incomplete (*entfremdet*).[1] The social origin of this inner division consists, for Marx, in the division of labour, particularly in the division of physical and intellectual work. "The division of labour," we read in the *Deutsche Ideologie*, "shows that as long as men live in a natural order of society there will be a cleavage between general and individual interests; so long as his activity is not voluntary, but dictated by natural considerations,[2] man's own achievements take the form of a power which confronts him and subjugates him, instead of being dominated by him."[3] These relationships between man and nature will be ordered quite differently in a free communistic society. "In communist society, where every man can develop himself in any way he chooses, instead of having to move in a circumscribed sphere of activity, society will control all the means of production and will make it possible for me to do one thing to-day, another to-morrow; in the morning, for me to hunt, in the afternoon, to fish, in the evening, to look after animals, and then to criticize according as I think fit, but without having to be either huntsman, fisherman, or critic."[4] In such conditions the sense of incompletion will completely disappear.

[1] Marx took this idea of *Entfremdung* from the Hegelian philosophy, though he tried to give it a new meaning.

[2] Marx's word *naturwüchsig* means literally "indigenous."—Trans.

[3] ME., I, 5, p. 29. [4] Ibid., p. 23.

The same idea, rather differently expressed, recurs in later Marxism in the well-known doctrine of the "fetish character" of goods in the first volume of *Das Kapital.* In one sense this theory provides the key to the understanding of the philosophical basis of the whole of the Marxist anthropology. It endeavours, with the aid of an example drawn from the elementary economic phenomenon of exchange-value, to explain the innermost meaning of the social relations of man which have originated in this experience of *Entfremdung.* The concrete embodiment of exchange-value is the commodity. This is usually an object possessing natural properties: colour, weight, etc. Yet there is no such inherent quality which can be described as exchange-value, although this does not prevent some of the representatives of political economy, as it is usually understood, from confusing exchange-value with such qualities as are inherent in the commodity. Here we are faced by the phenomenon of the domination of man by certain false ideas. The mystery of commodity-form consists in the fact that "it mirrors for men the social character of their own labour, as an objective character attaching to the labour products themselves, as a natural property of these things. Consequently the social relation of the producers to the sum of their own labour presents itself to them as a social relation, not between themselves, but between the products of their own labour. Thanks to this transference of qualities the labour products become commodities, transcendental or social things, which are at the same time perceptible by our senses. In like manner the impression which the light reflected from an object makes upon the retina is perceived, not as a subjective stimulation of that organ, but in the form of a concrete object existing outside the eye. But in vision, light actually passes from one thing, the external object, to another thing, the eye. On the other hand, the commodity form, and the

value relation between the labour products which finds expression in the commodity form, have nothing to do with the physical properties of the commodities or with the material relations that arise out of these physical properties."[1]

Man lives, therefore, under the domination of phantoms, illusions and ghosts which arise out of the confusion of social relationships. In order to dispel these illusions and fetishes which subjugate man it is enough to place such social relations on a rational basis and to systematize the labour which is natural to him. If we wish to envisage the disappearance of fetishism and the sense of incompletion (*Entfremdung*) we have only to imagine a society of free men who "work under a system of socially-owned means of production and regard their individual talents for work consciously as a social activity."[2]

The ideas described above suggest that the human history of the "fetish" period was no more than the history of the twilight of man's reason. Just as with Feuerbach, who believed that "what man declares about God he can in all truthfulness assert about himself,"[3] so also do we find the same conception in Marx: whatever he asserts about the commodity form he is able truthfully to assert about his own social relations and his own particular share in the division of labour.[4] As we have said, it is enough to expose

[1] *Kapital*, Eng. trans. Eden and Cedar Paul (Everyman), vol. i, p. 45. The author has not cited the whole passage, but has rather paraphrased the first half and pointed out that the *Entfremdung*, or sense of incompletion, in man is due to his having to regard the product of his labour as something independent of himself. The fetishistic character of a commodity about which Marx speaks might be elucidated by the establishment of a "numinous" relationship between it and the producer.—Translator's note.

[2] *Das Kapital*, p. 45.

[3] *Works*, vii, pp. 48-49.

[4] For the place of Feuerbach in Marx's works see A. Lévy, *La Philosophie de Feuerbach et son Influence sur la Littérature Allemande*, 1904, and G. Stammacher, *Das Philosophisch-ökonomische System des Marxismus*, Leipzig, 1909.

this falsehood in order to see things as they actually are. Here we see the most important difference between Feuerbach and Marx: the former believed that the exposure of the religious consciousness should be undertaken by the rational criticism of the philosopher, whereas Marx believed that the task of exposure would be achieved through the objective process of human history. For Feuerbach religion was only an error, whereas for Marx, on the contrary, "fetishism" is the result of the natural conditions of an economic activity.

(e) *According to Marx's view man is a historical entity which is to be understood in naturalistic and materialistic terms. But Marxist naturalism does not allow man to be absorbed into Nature, nor does it deny the basic difference between man and animal.*

A characteristic of many of the social theories of the Restoration period is that they deny the individuality of personality. For them, man was no monad, no ego living in a state of self-sufficiency, but a relation.

There is lacking in Marx any conception of man as an absolute, self-evident entity (*eine absolute Substanz*). Even Hegel's notion which endeavours to lose the individual ego in universal absolute spirit, has, in the view of Marx, too much of the flavour of substantiality. He criticizes Hegel because, in his *Phänomenologie*, he identifies "man" with "self." "The self, however, is only individuality conceived in terms of pure abstraction . . . The abstract, static self is simply man as an abstract egoist, or egoism elevated into a state of thought through pure abstraction."[1] The actual human self is only a historical phenomenon. As such it possesses no "eidetic" reality and no permanent form.

[1] *Das für sich abstrahierte und fixierte Selbst ist der Mensch als abstrakter Egoist, der in seiner reinen Abstraktion zum Denken erhobene Egoismuse*: (ME., I, 3, p. 158).

Marx attempts to prove the latter assertion by drawing a distinction between the so-called "personal" and the "accidental" individual. This distinction is for him "not a conceptual difference, but a historical fact."[1] It has a "different meaning for different periods." Class (*Stand*), for example, was an attribute of human personality in the Middle Ages, whereas in the eighteenth century it was something quite accidental. With the change in economic conditions the structure of human personality is changed. Personality as such is ephemeral: its constitutive elements are the result only of methods of production, of economic modes of life and activity, of the technique of labour. It is therefore scarcely worth while to look for "personal" elements in Marx's philosophy, as, for example, Berdiaeff does in an article entitled "Personne humaine et Marxiste" in a collective work *Communisme et les Chrétiens* (Paris, 1937). The Marxist criticism of the capitalist system does not begin with personality in the usual sense, but with the idea of the human individual as a definite physical, bodily existence, consisting of flesh and blood, and natural, material instincts set in motion by and inseparable from the society which conditions his life. We should not forget that the "egoistic man" in Stirner's sense is not individual, but collective, and that this conception was the starting-point of the Marxist anthropology. Added to this are the influences of French philosophy derived from practical materialism, that is, from a hedonistic and eudaemonistic ethic. We know that Marx himself liked to describe communism as a kind of "practical materialism." It is also easy to show that these motives are found in the later developments of the ideas of Marx and Engels. In a letter to the Russian sociologist, P. L. Lavrow (November 12, 1874), Engels says that one difference between man and the beasts is that the former struggles for pleasure whereas

[1] ME., I, 5, p. 60.

the latter struggle only for their existence. The struggle for pleasure, therefore, he adds, is the highest aim of all social reforms and ultimately of socialism.

Marxism is not only influenced by so-called "practical materialism" but it has at the same time absorbed a large dose of materialist philosophy as such. The only expressions of the "materialistic interpretation of history" which Marx formulates bear evident traces of ordinary materialism. Consciousness, so we read in the *Deutsche Ideologie*, not only depends on physical existence, but merely represents the ideological "reflex and echo" of the material life-process. This expression "reflex and echo"[1] shows that the founders of Marxism have themselves given occasion for a so-called "mechanistic" interpretation of their teaching. "Even the mirages in the human brain," Marx adds, after having applied this expression "reflex and echo," "are inevitable sublimations of a life-process which can be materially and empirically determined and preconditioned by material considerations. Morality, religion, metaphysics, and other ideologies and the types of life which correspond to them no longer retain any semblance of independence. They have no history; they have no development; but men change the material processes of production and develop material communications, and in and through these changes in reality they also alter their thought and the product of their thought."[2] What Engels often said later about the independent validity of an ideology was only an accommodation to the obvious facts of experience.

It is, therefore, easy to understand why Marx and Engels were so enthusiastic about the work of Darwin: so far as social science was concerned, they were actually Darwinists before Darwin. In many ways they had anticipated the Darwinian conception of man, but they differed favourably in their sociology from the ordinary Darwin-

[1] ME., I, 5, pp. 19–20. [2] ME., I, 5, pp. 15–16.

ians of whom there were so many in the middle of the nineteenth century. In spite of their undeniable preference for the naturalistic theory of evolution, Marx and Engels never lost sight of the distinction between man and the animals.[1] Man reproduces the whole of nature: that is what Marx means by "universal." "Man masters nature; in his relation to nature he is master, whereas the animal is simply a part of nature. Through human productivity man humanizes nature, and as a result, nature appears as his work."[2]

From the foregoing it follows that the well-known definition of Aristotle, adopted almost universally by later Christian literature, of man as an "animal rationale," is not entirely foreign to Marx;[3] he tried to improve this definition by making a very close connection between human reason and labour. Man is a rational being because he is able to create tools and instruments, and is able to devote himself to economic activity (whereas the animal does not produce; it only accumulates). Marx employs Benjamin Franklin's definition of man as a "tool-making animal."[4] The creature which is able to make tools is essentially rational.[5] Man is, therefore, not only a rational animal: he is a creature capable of production, technical achievement, and mastery over nature. And these two aspects of human existence (reason, and the capacity for using tools) are closely related to each other and mutually interdependent.

In the history of philosophical anthropology and sociology, Marx is not the only one who has recognized the significance of the technical factor in the development of

[1] ME., I, 3, p. 187. [2] Ibid.

[3] For the relation between Aristotle and Marx's theory see Erdmann, "Die philosophischen Voraussetzungen der materialistischen Geschichtsauffassung," in *Schmollers Jahrbuch*, 1907, p. 3.

[4] *Kapital*, I, pp. 350, 141 ff.

[5] Ibid., I, p. 140; E.Tr. E. and C. Paul, I, 169, 170.

man. Quite independently of him a movement arose which has investigated the function of the tool and has arrived at a similar definition of man to his own (cf. L. Geiger, Kapp, Noriée, H. Bergson). The Marxist anthropology is a theory of the creative evolution of man which gives the necessary place to the theory of creative revolution. For Marxism, therefore, human history is simply "the generation of man through human labour." Socialist man possesses the "obvious incontrovertible proof of his birth through his own effort, a proof which is found in the very process of his origin."[1]

Thus Marxism has elaborated a conception of man which can with justice be defined as activist. The fundamental principle underlying this conception is not the "object," but man's own activity.[2] Marx insists that man's "active side" has been hitherto represented not by materialism, but by idealism, which, however, is not aware of "actual, concrete activity as such." Feuerbach, who emphasized this "active side" in philosophy, thought of it only as a theoretical condition, not as a "*praktisch-menschlich-sinnliche, praktisch-kritische*" revolutionary activity. This practical quality is the criterion of the truth of human cognition. "In practice man must demonstrate the truth, that is, the reality, power, and this-sidedness (*Diesseitigkeit*) of his thought." Thoughts stated in this way gave some Marxists reason to compare Marxist philosophy with those types of philosophical doctrine which saw the highest philosophical principle not in objective reality, but in the activities of man as a biological individual (e.g., Empiriocriticism, Pragmatism, etc.). The well-known physicist Ernst Mach, for example, regarded science as a by-product of human labour.[3] Human cognition was for

[1] ME., I, 3, p. 125.
[2] As in Marx's famous thesis on Feuerbach, ME., I, 5, p. 533.
[3] E. Mach, *Erkenntnis und Irrtum*, 1905, and his *Theory of Heat.*

him only an instrument capable of being of assistance in technical activity. Lenin's famous philosophical opponent, A. Bogdanov, has expounded Marxism in this sense and was for this reason excommunicated by Lenin. "Physical science," Bogdanov says, "is nothing but an ideology resulting from the productive energies of society."[1] This particular Marxist tendency which had supporters in the west[2] is nearer to the anthropology of early Marxism than to the later naturalistic cosmology of Engels and Lenin.

(f) *According to the Marxist theory man as a historical fact has no higher value, no absolute moral value. Marxism acknowledges human value only in so far as man's life is conditioned by the course of history.*

In addition to the metaphysical doctrine of man as a personality, there is what might be called the axiological problem of man: the problem of the moral value of actual human existence. This problem has never been stated by Marxism as an independent question for philosophical enquiry. Nevertheless, Marxism does work with certain conceptions of value which it unconsciously recognizes and endows with historico-philosophical form. One often speaks of Marxist individualism, of the Marxist struggle for the rights of the "under-dog" and so forth. It is easy to adduce instances in the works of Marx and Engels of what are so clearly "individualistic" modes of thought that no impartial observer can deny them. In the interests of truth, however, it must be admitted that this Marxist "individualism" is to be clearly differentiated from that of liberal democracy. Marx established this difference in an

[1] *Vide* Bogdanov's preface to the Russian translation of Mach's *Die Analyse der Empfindungen*, Moscow, 1908.

[2] E.g., Fr. Adler, Mach's *Uberwindung des mechanischen Materialismus*, Vienna, 1918. Adler, whose Marxist sympathies are unquestionable, is now secretary of the Second International.

article on the Jewish question, published in 1843, in which he discovers that the "democratic" conception of man is false because it is too "Christian." This conception holds "that not one man alone but each man has value as a sovereign being: man even as uncultured and unsocial, man in his casual manner of being, man as he walks and stands, as he is when spoilt by the whole mechanism of history, subordinated to the domination of inhuman relations and forces: in a word, man who is not yet a proper representative of a species (*Gattungswesen*). . . . For liberal democracy that illusion, dream, and postulate of Christianity, namely, man as a sovereign soul, but entirely different from real man as he actually is, is a concrete reality, an actuality, a practical maxim of this world."[1]

Historical man, therefore, is not the possessor of any absolute value as Christians and democrats believe. He is in no way of absolute significance in his own right, for whatever value he possesses is dependent on his historical function, and on the relation in which he stands to the process of historical development. He is the bearer of value only in so far as he is the expression of the positive forces of history. Otherwise he loses whatever positive value he has. For Marxism, therefore, man is a kind of "sandwich-man": for as an individual personality he disappears between the sandwich-boards on which history has inscribed its legend and which he is destined to carry about with him. He has significance in so far as what is written on him is historically good (i.e. progressive). But it is not always good. "The persons of capitalists and landowners are not," Marx writes in his preface to the first edition of the first volume of *Das Kapital*, "depicted in rose-tinted colours; but if I speak of individuals *it is only in so far as they are the personifications of economic categories and representatives of special class relations and interests.* Inasmuch as I conceive

[1] ME., I, 1, p. 590.

the development of the economic structure of society to be a natural process, I should be the last to hold the individual responsible for conditions whose creature he himself is, socially considered, however he may raise himself above them subjectively."[1] When Marx paints the proletarian in rosy colours and describes his virtues, these qualities are not the expression of the inner life of the proletarian soul, but are, in like manner, only "historical categories," the "personifications of special class relations." In other words, Marxism does not believe in the validity of certain ideal values, or of personality. The ethic of value, of the categorical imperative, or of moral autonomy, as established by the Kantians, is not a Marxist ethic. The logical Marxist cannot assert with Kant that "in the whole of creation whatever man wants, and whatever he is able to do are simply means to be used; man alone . . . is an end in himself." Marxism does not justify the ethic which holds that the end justifies the means;[2] it does, however, support the view that the process of history and the law of historical evolution do determine the value of man and therefore make of the individual man, in certain circumstances, a means. The ethical teaching of Marxism is a consequence of the Hegelian philosophy which also found in the historical evolution of the idea of the Absolute the basis of man's ethical life, though Marx and Engels substitute for this the idea of economic relations and class interests. The belief that the

[1] Eng. Trans., vol. ii, p. 864.

[2] But cf. *Lenin*: "In our opinion morality is entirely subordinate to class war; everything is moral which is necessary for the annihilation of the old exploiting order and for the uniting of the proletariat"; and *Preobazhenski:* "Whereas in a society in which there are no classes lying is a disadvantage in itself . . . the case is quite different in a society based on class. In the struggle of an exploited class against their enemies, lying and deceit are very important weapons." Quoted by R. Fülöp-Müller, *Lenin and Gandhi*.—Translator.

process of historical evolution is "good," that "it" moves from necessity towards freedom, is also Hegelian, as Marx and Engels admit. They believed that each stage of history brings an improvement, and that the various social classes which appear successively in history carry in themselves ethical values which justify their struggle for power and create of other classes only an instrument for the achievement of the aims of human evolution. From this standpoint any doctrine of the higher worth of man is simply an object of scorn.[1]

(g) *The birth in communistic society of the individual personality is made possible, according to Marxist teaching, by the complete identification in such society of the "individual" with the "general," of human personality with society. Only such an identification can guarantee the reconstruction of the "total man" and of the "truly human individual."*

The theory of the so-called totalitarian state is by no means a contemporary product. Totalitarian ideas are found quite definitely in some of the "organic" doctrines of the Restoration period. In the opinion of some representatives of this type of thought the totalitarian state is a universe in itself, in which all things are compressed into a whole, and where there is no contradiction between the particular and the general. "The disturbing factor throughout is the egoism of the individual, who challenges the Whole."[2] Such a state is no longer a state because the people living in it are not governed by anybody. But these advocates of the organic theory conceived the embodiment of their ideal as existing in the past or in the present, whereas the Marxists believe that it is to be found only in the future after the collapse of the old order. Only then will such a communistic society be possible, requiring

[1] ME., I, 5, pp. 58–59.

[2] J. Wagner, *System der Idealphilosophie*, Leipzig, 1804, p. 115.

neither state nor government; in it law, as a bourgeois system, will be superfluous; it is nonsense to believe, we are told in the *Deutsch-französische Jahrbücher*, that there will be any question of duties and rights in the communistic society—of two complementary aspects of an antithesis which belongs only to bourgeois society. Of course there will not be lacking in this society a certain solidarity, but this must not be interpreted in its bourgeois sense. "The awareness of individuals of their mutual relationship," we read in the *Deutsche Ideologie*, "will have as little to do with the 'love-principle' or 'dévouement' as has egoism." And the chief thing is that in such an ideal society there will be a complete identity between the individual man and the community. In Marx's view the contrast of the individual as an independent, self-consistent being with human society is only conceivable at certain periods of history. Such a contrast is the product of the "inorganic" condition of modern society, the product of that sense of incompletion and division which we have already mentioned. In fully developed societies this complete identification of self and species is indispensable. "Not until man has recognized his own powers as social powers and organized them as such, and in this way has ceased to see any separation of social from political power, can human emancipation be accomplished."[1] We are here face to face with an ideally formulated ideal of totalitarian society. Society is here a totality, but the individual also achieves his totality, or as Marx says, he is at the same time a "particular individual" and the "ideal totality," the subjective existence of a society which has been imagined and experienced.[2] But this external resemblance of the

[1] *Judenfrage*, cited by Mehring, *Aus dem Literarischen Nachlass*, B. I., p. 424.

[2] "das subjektive Dasein der gedachten und empfundenen Gesellschaft für sich" (ME., I, 3, 117), that is, a microcosm of society.

ideals of totalitarian society and the totalitarian state does not in the least degree justify their identification with one another. The doctrine of the totalitarian state confers upon the state absolute value; the state is the highest thing that exists, it is even divine; but the Marxist conception of the totalitarian society goes beyond the state: it demands the abolition of the state when the condition of communism is reached, preaching the death of all the power and force exercised by the state, and promising complete freedom. It is here that the chief paradox of the Marxist teaching about the totalitarian society is revealed. It is believed by many that the ultimate condition of the communist society will therefore be one of anarchy; but in so doing they tend to forget that the fathers as well as the disciples of Marxism (including Lenin) fought against anarchism and anarchistic tendencies. The Marxist theory sees in the totalitarian society of the future a stateless but nevertheless organized condition, not one of anarchistic chaos. It is, however, questionable whether the absolute liberation of man from the state as a resultant socially organized condition is even thinkable. In our opinion there are two solutions to the problem: either the superstate community is a kind of animal society, like an ant-hill or a beehive—or it is a form of secular Church. Neither of these is a state, yet they are both organized. We cannot suggest any third possibility.[1]

B. *The Christian Conception of Man and the Anthropology of Marxism.*

It is scarcely possible to speak of a uniform Christian anthropology from the historical standpoint, for the history

[1] The first possibility is presented by Bogdanov (*Der Stürz des Fetischismus*, 1910 russ.) and Lenin (*Staat und Revolution*, 1917); the second by J. Dietzgen (*Die Religion und Sozialdemokratie*, 1870–75, Berlin, 1900).

of Christian thought reveals as many kinds of theories about man as there are Christian philosophies. The task which we have set ourselves does not consist in the establishment of a doctrine of man corresponding to any particular confessional or philosophical school. We shall merely enumerate some of the general tendencies of the Christian conception of man as they are found in the sources of the Christian faith, and, in a general sense, accepted by all Christians. Our task is to compare and contrast this general Christian idea of man with the Marxist conception which has been described above. In drawing possible analogies between Marxism and this Christian idea we must be careful not to regard either of them as purely static. Further, what is under consideration is not the comparison of two complete and fully crystallized systems, but far more the approximation of two living movements which illuminate each other and can lead to a recovery of a true understanding of human nature. There is always something artificial about analogies if they are purely external; for an analogy is only profitable if it throws light on the immanent perception of the qualities of things, not when it is merely the play of human thought, which can compare anything you like with anything else.

(a) *The Marxist anthropological exposition of nature is not opposed to the spirit of Christianity if we omit the idea of creation; this, however, constitutes a limit beyond which the analogy cannot proceed.*

Man's relation to nature, and the cosmological problem in general, form a very vulnerable place in the Christian philosophy as it is set forth in revelation and in the original sources: in the Old and New Testaments. The New Testament has not formulated any cosmological problem: the book of Genesis, however, regards man as the crown of creation. In this view, it is difficult to say

whether man is a product of nature or whether nature was only created for his benefit. In all the other passages in the Old Testament nature is referred to only in so far as it fulfils some function in the relation of man to God: thus it is with the help of nature that God, by means of various physical phenomena, demonstrates to man His Power, His Will, and His Plans. For the prophetic consciousness nature was never autonomous, with its own inner life, expressing its own laws and possessing (though of course unconsciously) a soul of its own. Nature was no more than a divine alphabet, a collection of objects created by God. The prophetic consciousness had none of that feeling for nature which the Greeks possessed to a superlative degree. In this sense we are justified in saying that both the Old and the New Testaments are definitely anthropological rather than cosmological in character. Even in later Christian thought, as during the Middle Ages after the adoption of the Aristotelian philosophy, cosmological questions did not come to the fore. At the centre of medieval thought there were always theological problems which were inseparable from the Christian elucidation of human problems. The so-called medieval *Weltanschauung*, even if, generally speaking, it was more alive than the Hebrew spirit to the recognition of nature, still regarded nature simply as a means of finding the way to God.[1] An autonomous and intuitive appreciation of nature, apart from any connection with theology, was scarcely known in the Middle Ages and failed to give any inspiration to the soul of medieval man. There is, moreover, no doubt at all that the awakening of the intuitive perception of nature at the time of the Renaissance was not due to Christianity, but to the influence of Greek philosophy. Thus, the later European physical science and the naturalistic outlook

[1] See Bonaventura, *Itinerarium mentis in Deum, Prologus*, 9.

may be said to have sprung not from Christian principles, but from those of ancient philosophy.

From all that has just been said we may well believe it is in this sphere of anthropological and cosmological problems that we may light on some traces of those hidden threads which connect the Marxist *Weltanschauung* with the Hebrew prophetic spirit and hence with the Christian spirit. The Marxist leaning towards the anthropological approach to nature, towards the view that in any view of nature all "fine talk" about "Substance" should be banned, the assertion that nature only exists for the sake of man, and that nature only moulds man's external body: all these are ideas which have a greater affinity with Christian doctrine than with the ancient cosmology and the more modern scientific view of nature which is derived from it. In the modern era, from external necessity, Christianity has been compelled to accommodate itself to the scientific view of the world; though it is doubtful if this accommodation has been successful, indeed, we may well ask whether, even at the present day, there is not an irreconcilable antithesis between the scientific and the Christian views of the world. Under these conditions it is quite possible that the anthropological conception of nature held by the Marxists might be so interpreted as to be not inconsistent with Christian doctrine. We mention this problem without settling it, believing that in view of the present uncertainty which surrounds cosmological questions in Christian philosophy it would be good to examine the whole question seriously. At this juncture, however, we can say with confidence that the Marxist anthropological approach to nature in no way contradicts the Christian view. At this point, however, we are confronted by a difficulty which we must always bear in mind.

Christian anthropology always takes the idea of divine creation for granted, whereas Marxism obviously rejects

it. In Marx's *Oekonomisch-philosophischen Manuskripten* we find some very interesting observations on what is called "creationism," in which his opposition to the Christian doctrine is expressed very clearly. Marx proceeds from the view that the Creation contradicts the self-glorification of socialist man. A created being is dependent, for it exists "by the grace of another," namely, the Creator. Thus, from the standpoint of independence only the theory of the self-generation of man is acceptable. Marx, of course, did not believe that primitive man consciously created himself; he only believed that matter and life contain immanent creative forces which are expressed in various forms in world history. Marxism, therefore, as we have already said, must be understood in the sense of Bergson's "creative evolution." For this reason Marx regards the *generatio aequivoca* as the only possible hypothesis on which to base an explanation of the origin of life.

The foregoing ideas are essential, because they bring out very clearly the contrast between them and the so-called "Christian awareness."[1] The self-creating man of Marxism is actually a Titan, "who confronts the gods and only in himself recognizes the all-highest." We have here an excellent example of this one-sided *Schöpfergefühl* and *Hochgefühl* (Otto) of the man who glorifies himself. The Christian conception of creation (and that held generally speaking by all religions) does not repudiate the assertion that man "as creative feels himself to be one with the Creator from all eternity"; but at the same time it calls attention to the other pole of human nature: the moment at which man is aware of the futility of created existence, its vanity and emptiness; when he feels that he is a "miserable creature." It is in the creation-hypothesis that

[1] We use here Otto's terminology, which in this connection distinguishes very clearly between Christianity and Marxism. Cf. *West-östliche Mystik*, second ed., 1929, p. 135, passim.

the specifically religious awareness of man's dependence is found; this sense of dependence is completely absent from Marxism, and gives it its fundamentally anti-religious character.

A few words remain to be said about the later cosmological motives in Marxism as considered from the Christian standpoint. The elevation of material nature to a position of absolute significance, which we find in the later stages of Marxism, is completely opposed to the spirit of Christian philosophy and makes any comparison between Christianity and Marxism impossible. If man is only a product of physical nature, only an insignificant part of the infinite material substance, then it is questionable whether a small piece of matter will ever be able to conquer the material world. The lord of nature must in some sense stand over and above nature, and must not be regarded as an inseparable part of the infinite whole of the physical world.

We believe that in that which concerns the idea of dialectic, the special emphasis on the principle of identity (as, for instance, in Thomism) does not constitute an indispensable element of Christian philosophy. Christian philosophy, particularly in regard to the problem of man, is bound to be dialectic, and should keep before it constantly the antinomian and paradoxical character of human nature. In this sense the dialectic idea is quite Christian. Yet, from the standpoint of a Christian dialectic it would appear that the Marxist view of human nature is *not sufficiently* dialectical. Marxism concentrates one-sidedly on *one* aspect of human nature only—the material, physical, economic—and ignores the other—the spiritual, metaphysical, ideal. It also exaggerates the titanic, self-glorifying side, and forgets the other; the fact that man has been created. Marxism does not seem to be aware of these antinomies, and makes no attempt to develop them in a

deliberate and philosophical manner. Marxism ceases to use the dialectical method precisely where it needs it most.

(b) *The Marxist view of man as a social being agrees in many respects with the spirit of Christianity. This agreement, however, is limited by the negative attitude of Marxism towards the Christian principle of love.*

The comparison between the Marxist and Christian conceptions of man, within the framework of the problems which have been mentioned, compels us to ask the following question which is of immense importance for the Christian concept of man: Is man, according to this concept, to be conceived as an abstract, isolated individual, or is he for Christian doctrine also a social being which cannot be imagined as existing apart from relations to other men? The history of Christian philosophy supplies an unambiguous answer to this question: the doctrine of the social nature of man was from the beginning a recognized Christian doctrine even though the Christians took it over from Aristotle. The only question is how far this doctrine is compatible with the so-called "Christian individualism." For of late, according to an American thinker, there has been a very widespread idea that Christianity pursues individualistic rather than social ends.[1] This point of view is supported with similar force by a well-known German scholar, who says that Christianity "is an unlimited, unqualified individualism. The standard of this individualism . . . is determined simply by its own sense of that which will further its consecration to God."[2] Only as a second, derivative element does the nature of man appear as social. The individual as a form

[1] Reinhold Niebuhr, "Christian Politics and Communist Religion," in *Christianity and the Social Revolution*, Gollancz, 1935.

[2] Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, Eng. Trans., p. 55.

of absolute value only attains his fulfilment "through self-abnegation in unconditional obedience to the Holy Will of God." In this originates the idea of "the absolute live-community of those united together in God," which also forms an indispensable element in the Christian concept of man. In Christianity, according to Troeltsch, "absolute individualism" is transformed into "absolute universalism." These two poles require each other and are complementary.[1] We believe, however, that Troeltsch separates too widely these two poles. In practice, the Christian does achieve this "universality," that is, complete unity of the individual with the universal, of course, only through his *unio mystica* with God; though once he has reached this stage, universal, and therefore social, existence becomes a thing of equal, if not greater, importance (i.e., than individual existence). On this level perhaps the whole position should be reversed, and the starting-point should not be the individual but the divine society. Christianity postulates such a mutual interpenetration of the individualistic and the universal elements that priority has to be given not to the individual but to the social whole: the individual personality is thus regarded as issuing from the human community.

We can pursue the analogy between Marxism and Christianity concerning the social nature of man even further. Neither Christianity nor Marxism regards as static the existing modes of social life. The Christian does not seek in them the ideal expression of the unity of the individual man with society; this is for him only to be found in the Kingdom of God, which is "not of this world," but is only possible after the transfiguration of this world and the resurrection of the dead. In this sense the attempt to identify the Kingdom of God with any

[1] Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, Eng. Trans., p. 41.

particular social programme (as, for example, with social democracy) is folly. Even the best possible social programme can only create a god-fearing life on earth: it cannot create the Kingdom of God.

In some ways anti-Christian Marxist thought is nearer to the social-political ideal of Christianity than these "organic" political philosophies which have already been mentioned. This statement follows from the fact that the Marxist doctrine of the antinomian character of existing social forms, and in particular the antagonistic nature of the state as an organization of class forces, is in full accord with the spirit of such Christian political views as we find in the Old Testament and in the Book of Revelation. The affinity between Marxism and the Hebrew prophetic spirit cannot be questioned. It is, of course, not a matter of close agreement about the details of the class-war theory, but only the general conception of the state as an institution which originates in brute force alone, an institution, moreover, which is in harmony with the decay of society, and is bound to disappear in the perfect community of the future. The Chosen People, according to the Old Testament, lived originally in a stateless condition, as the free community of the children of Yahweh, who alone was their legitimate king. The Hebrew ideal was that of an earthly theocracy, to which the idea of the power of the state was strange, and which was governed by the prophets, the mediators of the Divine Will. The state, in the Biblical conception, began with the period of degeneration, as a product of murder, crime, and sin. The first king was Abimelech, whose authority the Bible compares to a bramble which alone was willing to accept the crown, whereas all the other noble and useful trees refused it.[1] The anointing of Saul is regarded as a transgression of the law. In the words of Samuel a state with a king at its head

[1] Judges ix. 7 ff.

is a refuge for everything evil. "This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them unto him, for his chariots and to be his horsemen; and they shall run before his chariots . . . and he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants."[1] Kingship is, therefore, an institution for exploitation: in the Bible as well as in Marxism.

The idea of the class-struggle in the Marxist sense cannot, however, be found in Christian doctrine. But the mystical conception of the external and internal history of nations as a bitter struggle appears in the symbols of the Book of Revelation. Nowhere is the catastrophic character of man's history so clearly described as in this Christian book. The social implication of chapters xvii and xviii is worth special attention. In these chapters the noteworthy thing, as a recent Russian commentator on the Apocalypse has observed, is the symbolic description of the most powerful of all known systems, namely, capitalism: "the great harlot that sitteth on many waters."[2] "The following words of the Apocalypse," says this writer, "point directly to this: 'The great city which rules over all the kings of the earth' " (xvii. 18). The symbols, with the aid of which this social system and its decline are characterized, result in the following historical picture: we see first of all this system on the pinnacle of power, self-satisfied and infinitely proud in its complacence. ("I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall in no wise see mourning," xviii. 7.) Thereupon follows the sudden catastrophe, and the system is destroyed by the very beast which has supported it. In the very depths of the system are the forces which are

[1] 1 Sam. viii. 11–14.

[2] xvii. 1. Cf. N. Sotnitzky, *The Ultimate Ideal*, Harbin, 1932.

evoked to destroy it. These are the dark forces of chaos, the "anarchy of production," of which Marx has spoken.[1]

We must now try to answer the following question: Is Christianity committed to the "antagonistic" theory of society as expounded by Marx, with all its consequences: of class-struggle, social revolution, and the practice of militant communism? The endeavour to answer this question leads to the following conclusions.

From the standpoint of things as they are (but not from the ideal standpoint) there is no reason why the Christian should minimize the element of social antagonism in modern society. Every lasting and properly organized social unity presupposes a certain degree of solidarity (or loyalty) among the individuals or groups who constitute it. Without such solidarity the community is transformed into a state of inner conflict, or assumes the appearance of a purely mechanically imposed unity which by means of might alone is able to force upon people some kind of collective consciousness. But this recognition of solidarity as a formal principle and as a general category of social life has nothing to do with the various political and economic theories of so-called "solidarity" which minimize the part played in history by the inner contradictions existing in the social order, and have been justifiably attacked by the socialists. The principle of solidarity assumes greater importance only when we pass from existing social conditions to social ideals. Christians and Marxists agree that the ideally conceived classless society can only be built upon the basis of social solidarity.

From the standpoint of what ought to be the Christian cannot allow himself to take part in the class-struggle or in social revolution like the Marxists. In this respect any attempt to discover a closer approximation between Marxism and Christianity is doomed to failure from the

[1] Loc. cit., 185, 191.

outset. The ethical aspect (though not the economic practice) of the theory of the class-struggle and social revolution is frequently supported by appealing to the Old Testament. Here the valid norm consists in the familiar saying, "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth."[1]

(c) *There is contact between Christianity and Marxism in the idea of man as a psycho-physical being. This contact, however, ceases with the statement of the Christian doctrine of man as the "Image of God."*

It is undeniable that both Marxism and Christianity belong to those types of doctrine which do not begin with the metaphysical-idealistic hypothesis of the absolute autonomy of man (*der Mensch an sich*), of the ego on a level with God. There is certainly a resemblance between the two systems in the rejection of such a purely idealistic anthropology. The analogy becomes still clearer when we pass to the question of the dual character of man as at once spiritual and physical. A certain "materialism" is not entirely foreign to the Christian conception of man, particularly when we consider the most important of the original sources of this conception. The idea of man as a purely spiritual, ideal being is actually a later product of Christian philosophy; for the Old Testament conceives man as a being composed of body and soul.[2] In the New Testament doctrine of the resurrection the body is concerned as well as the soul. The Pauline Epistles, too, show traces of the "materialist" tradition of Stoicism, in which the body is an integral and inseparable element of human nature. The familiar Pauline doctrine of the different kinds of body[3] leads to the conclusion that the present human body can be transformed into another material form.

[1] Cf. Esther ix, 5, 15.
[2] Cf. Fr. Rüsche, *Blut, Leben und Seele*, 1930.
[3] 1 Corinthians xv. 39 ff.

Many other early Christian theologians (e.g. Tatian, Athenagoras, Irenaeus, Tertullian) had theories about the interrelation of body and soul in personality and even arrived at a kind of "mystical materialism." This tradition has never died out in subsequent Byzantine theology. All this goes to support the statement that the Christian is justified in accepting the Marxist teaching about the close connection between consciousness and material existence, at any rate in so far as it is concerned with human nature. It is also quite possible to approach the interaction of human nature and human history, materialistically and economically conceived, in a general Marxist sense, without ceasing to be a Christian, and without being in the least obliged to accept its one-sided mechanistic interpretations of economic materialism, in which material existence is given a primary place, and consciousness is regarded as no more than a "reflex and echo" of material conditions.[1] Fortunately, however, Russian Marxist theory of the post-Lenin period has recognized the independent nature of consciousness, as well as the positive character of human personality, and in this way has substantially modified the one-sidedness of the materialistic view of the relation between nature and consciousness.

For the satisfactory elucidation of this problem it might be necessary to ask whether the theory of the dependence of consciousness on the physical world is valid only for an imperfect society, and, therefore, that when the stage of "positive humanism" has been attained—that is, after the final liberation of man from the power of nature and from slavery to economic conditions has been achieved—it will disappear, or whether it is valid in all circumstances and for all time. Hitherto, Marxist theory has not offered any answer to this question; but, if the first theory is right, and if the dependence of consciousness on nature is only

[1] See above.

relative, it should be possible for Christians and Marxists to reach complete agreement on this particular point.

It now remains to be seen how Christianity stands in relation to the Marxist attempt to differentiate between man and animal. Hitherto, Christianity has offered no unambiguous answer to the problem of this relation though innumerable theories have been suggested, which are often mutually contradictory. One thing, however, must be noted: the Marxist idea of man's creativity as a thing of positive value and a peculiarity of human life is Christian in its origin: for no other religion has rated so highly the significance of work, the creative powers of man, and his capacities for organization.[1] This is clearly expressed in the familiar words of the Apostle Paul, in which he insists that man's right to eat depends upon the fact that he works, a declaration which is now embodied in the official text of the new Soviet constitution. We know that the interpretation of these words in Christian theology and philosophy has varied at different times, but their meaning remains, generally speaking, the same. Work, that is, man's creative activity, is of value for its own sake, no matter whether it is of absolute or of relative importance, whether it originates in love towards God or towards man, or whether it is the result of the injunction to live the ascetic life. In this sense the Marxist conception of the creative man is in agreement with certain tendencies in Christian civilization, out of which have come the activism of the West and the whole of modern industrial and technical society. The fact that the value of man's creative and organizing activity is appreciated not only by the various Protestant sects but also by the more mystically minded Christianity of the East is clearly seen in those ideas in Byzantine theology, which found in

[1] See Max Weber, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie*, 1920, and H. Bergson, *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion*, Paris, 1932.

this capacity for creation and organizing the distinctive feature of human life, which raises man above all other creatures, even above the angels.[1]

(d) *The real, perfect man, according to Christian doctrine, is revealed only in the person of Jesus Christ, Son of Man and Son of God, who is one element (hypostasis) in the Trinity. One can therefore only speak of the perfect man, from the Christian standpoint, in the sense of his relationship to the Son of God, that is, communion with Him and with the Holy Trinity.*

Christianity, considered in its philosophical and metaphysical aspect, does not belong to those doctrines which see in the Absolute an indivisible Unity, but rather to those which attribute inner "social" relations to the Absolute and do not seek to detach the idea of God from that of community, for the Trinity itself is an example of a relation between "persons" and is the most complete of all forms of "community." Christian metaphysics are in this way definitely sociological in character, which becomes clearer when we consider that according to the Christian conception the "real" man, as he is capable of being, will be revealed only in the Kingdom of God. Philosophically expressed, such a condition will only be realized after the fundamental transformation of physical nature. This radical revolution having been achieved, however, man will not have the status of an individual pure and simple, with no relations to other men, but as a part of the whole, of the Heavenly Church, which through its mystical relationship to the Son of God cannot be conceived apart from the Trinity. It is this which distinguishes the Christian idea of man from those purely individualistic philosophies which regard man "as such" as nothing but an individual being, as, for example, in some tendencies of Indian thought, according to which the soul after its

[1] See G. Palamae, *Capita physica*, Migne, S.G.T. 155, Col. 1166.

redemption is in complete isolation, and for such a soul not only the world, but even the idea of "community" is doomed to disappear.[1] But, on the other hand, this Christian notion of transcendental social relations does not imply that the individual is lost in the whole; on the contrary it demands the forceful expression of his individuality. As Royce has with justice observed, it is in this that the difference consists between the Christian and the Buddhist ideas of redemption, for according to the latter man ceases, in the state of Nirvana, to be an individual.[2]

Thus it is possible to perceive certain analogies between the social character of the Marxist notion of man and the social implications of Christian metaphysics. For Marxism, as for Christianity, the conception of man as a social being cannot be excluded from an analysis of human nature. For both the fulfilment of the nature of the individual man and the fulfilment of the nature of society are inconceivable apart from one another. The Christian doctrine of the final cataclysm and of the future transfiguration and the resurrection of the dead suggest some similarity to the Marxist theory of the final collapse of society. In each case the existence of the new-born "real" man is bound up with the rest of mankind. It would seem that only one further step might be necessary in order to conceive of the ultimate Marxist ideal of social life as a Church-ideal, which we have already discussed.

These observations certainly throw light upon enormous differences between the Christian philosophy, founded as it is on faith and revelation, and Marxism, which claims to be scientific, realistic, positivist, and is hostile to all forms of mysticism. And this difference is so great that it compels us to reverse the methods which we have hitherto adopted and to consider Christianity and Marxism not in

[1] Cf. R. Garbe, *Die Samkhja Philosophie*, 1894, p. 326.
[2] Royce, *The Problem of Christianity*, i, p. 190.

the light of their points of contact, but of the great differences which separate their conceptions of human nature from each other.

### 3. THE CHRISTIAN AND MARXIST CONCEPTION OF HUMAN NATURE CONSIDERED IN THE LIGHT OF THEIR DIFFERENCES

(a) *The deepest cleavage between the two consists in this: that whereas Christianity is a religion based on faith and revelation, Marxism is a social system philosophically and scientifically founded on human reason.*

This difference should not be ignored—although this happens far too often—especially in the face of the assertion that there is no real antithesis between revelation and reason, and that revelation must be justified at the bar of reason. Whoever is of this opinion forgets that historically the Marxist system arose from the radical disagreement between Christianity and rationalism. What Engels could not accept about revelation was the idea that God is "non-rational" (we would say suprarational), in other words, that reason was not supreme. Possibly it is at this point that we see the deepest difference between Marxism and Christianity. If everything were ordered according to the laws of reason, Engels concluded, the "divine personality" would become superfluous, for the human consciousness would be raised to the level of the divine.[1] Those who consider that a peaceful return of Marxism to Christianity is possible, and, conversely, that a painless approach, unaccompanied by any inner struggle, of Christianity to Marxism is also possible, forget the spiritual crisis which drove Christian philosophy from the Reformation to Hegel, and from Hegel to Feuerbach, Stirner, Marx, and Engels.

[1] ME., I, 2, p. 224.

Marxism is often described as a kind of religion, which ultimately has its basis in faith and has a God of its own. Marxism is the belief in the earthly millennium,[1] with the perfect human society or the collective godlike man in the place of God.[2] Seen from this angle, Marxism is a sort of deification of collective man and of a religion of humanity. In all this there is, of course, some modicum of truth, but it must be remembered at the same time that any attempt at a *purely religious* interpretation of Marxist doctrine is destined to fail because it tends to ignore the most important element in the Marxist philosophy and view of human nature, namely, their thoroughgoing atheism. The essence of Marxism consists in the fact that, in spite of the points of contact with Christianity which have already been described, it is furthest removed from a specifically *religious* attitude to man just *because* it goes furthest in its endeavours to confer absolute autonomy (*Verabsolutierung*) on the individual. This becomes clear as soon as a comparison is made between Marxism and other types of humanistic religion and philosophies which aim at making man into an absolute.

One thing, however, is certain: the idea of a religion of humanity as conceived by Comte and his contemporaries is completely foreign to Marxism; for the simple reason that Marx was extremely negative in his judgments on religion, and was not very particular about the way in which he expressed them. We have already seen that, historically considered, for Marxism religion is simply the result of the division of labour, namely, a product of the sense of incompletion or "estrangement" (*Entfremdung*). Religion springs out of the animal consciousness, the

[1] See Gerlach, *Der Kommunismus als Lehre vom Tausendjährigen Reich*, Munich, 1920, and recently H. Marr, *Die Massenwelt im Kampf um ihre Form*, Hamburg, 1934.

[2] Cf. Niebuhr, in *Christianity and the Social Revolution*, 461.

result of a one-sided sense of dependence on nature and society. Religion, therefore, is bound to disappear when the society of the future comes into being: atheism is one of the indispensable conditions of such a "positive humanism." From this point of view it is futile to speak of a renaissance of religion in socialist society, or of the rise of a new religion. Engels has expressed this very clearly and well in his essays on Carlyle. "We do not need," says Engels, "to impress upon what is truly human the stamp of the divine in order to be certain of its greatness and splendour. On the contrary, the more divine, that is, non-human, something is, the less shall we be able to admire it."[1] And if the leaders of Marxism, like Carlyle and other social reformers, wish to fight against the "indecision, the inner emptiness, the spiritual death, the dishonesty of our times," they will not do so by religious means. In the place of religion Marxism would set philosophy, as Marx in his younger days suggested in his articles in the *Rheinische Zeitung* (1842). Later, Marx chose to abandon philosophy and to regard science as a substitute for religion. In *Sankt Max* (1846) we read that "philosophy must be left on one side; as an ordinary man one has to cut oneself loose from it and devote oneself to the study of reality."[2]

In consequence of their anti-religious position Marx and Engels repudiate all forms of "Religious Socialism."[3] Such a position makes it impossible to discover any avenue of approach between Marxism and the religion of humanity or Religious Socialism. The chief feature of such a "religion," the conscious acknowledgment of the element of faith, is utterly lacking in Marxism. The Marxist glorification of collective man can be made to fit into the

[1] ME., I, 5, p. 427. [2] ME., I, 5, p. 216.

[3] Cf. *Manifest gegen Kriege* (1846); the article in the *Brüssele Deutsche Zeitung* (1847); Engel's *Briefe aus London* (ME., I, 2, pp. 370 ff.).

framework of pure knowledge alone: in this sense it must be regarded as a kind of science, denying even the ethical substance of socialism, namely, the conception of the social ideal. Instead of value-judgments there is the theory of the historical process. For the genuine Marxist a formula such as "The perfect society is the highest of all values" would be entirely unacceptable, for he would say that it does not "sound" Marxist. "Communism is for us not a condition," we read in the *Deutsche Ideologie*, "to have before us, an ideal with which reality will have to conform. We call communism itself the ultimate movement which puts an end to the present state. The conditions of this movement are the result of preconditions existing at the present time."[1]

These features of Marxist doctrine constitute an unbridgeable gulf between Marxism and the Christian religion. It is quite impossible to build a bridge between a religious system based on faith and revelation, like Christianity, and a doctrine, like Marxism, which is essentially atheistic and repudiates all forms of religious faith. Whether for a Christian or a Marxist the transition from Marxism to Christianity, and vice versa, would mean a real spiritual revolution. Without an inner upheaval the Christian cannot become a Marxist nor the Marxist a Christian.

It may, however, be argued that hitherto we have only been dealing with the purely theoretical aims of Marxism, whereas we ought also to take into consideration what Marxism actually is. Actually, it is argued, it contains, though perhaps unconsciously, certain elements of belief, that is to say, of religion. This is particularly true when we think not of Marxist theory but of so-called popular Marxism. The masses, it is said, can only be moved by some kind of faith, and this faith in the coming of the millennium

[1] ME., I, 5, p. 25.

on earth, the New Jerusalem, was and is, as a matter of fact, the motive force of the Marxist masses. All this, however, requires qualification. For Marxism mobilizes the masses, in the first place, not by appealing to their faith in, or their desire for, a New Jerusalem, but by appealing directly to their class interests. It suggests to the masses that the Socialist movement is their own affair, appealing to their own self-interest. In this there is a remarkable difference between Marxism and other socialist doctrines which are concerned with "ideas" and "ideals," rather than with purely material interests. We tend to forget that a great mass-movement founded on class-interests is easily capable of activity without any religious impulse at all. Further, there is a second consideration: whenever popular Marxism seems to show evidence of some element of "faith," it is a unique phenomenon, the explanation of which is made more difficult rather than easier by comparison with religious faith. The most important thing about the so-called "faith" of Marxism is not the absence of belief in a personal or impersonal God, for Buddhism does not acknowledge a god, although it can with truth be called a religion. Buddhism does embody the specifically religious type of feelings (or what Professor F. Stepun has so aptly called *Glaublichkeit*) which is completely absent from Marxism: that is, the feeling of dependence (cf. Schleiermacher), the *mysterium tremendum* (Otto), reverence for that which is higher than man. The *Hochgefhül* (Otto) of the Marxist mass-man who fights for his interests does not bear any trace of the characteristics of that emotion in its religious form. This proletarian elation grows out of the awareness of belonging to a certain class and is often only a polarization of bourgeois pride.

This does not imply, however, that in the so-called religious fervour of the Marxist masses (particularly in Russia), there are no quasi-religious elements (*Religiosität*)

especially if by this term we mean the "concentration of all spiritual forces in some all-embracing experience, the comprehension of such experience in terms of symbol and idea, utter devotion, and fanaticism."[1] This "religiosity" is, nevertheless, bound up with the most radical denial of the Christian faith, and is one of the most characteristic features of our time. The presence of such a specific kind of religiosity (or quasi-religiosity) is not sufficient to warrant our drawing analogies between Marxism and the Christian religion.

(b) *The second fundamental difference between Christianity and Marxism is expressed in the transcendental basis of the Christian conception of man contrasted with the exclusively immanent conception held by Marxism.*

If Marxism possesses certain elements of faith, such faith is tantamount to belief that human perfection is to be regarded as possible only in this world, whereas the fundamental dogma of Christianity can be summed up in the declaration: "My kingdom is not of this world." This does not mean that Christianity has no plans for this world, or that it is not prepared to recognize any mode of conduct designed for it; it means only that the dynamic impulse for the Christian is inseparable from belief in God and in the possibility of life after death. To a Marxist such a belief appears completely nonsensical. Nowhere are the well-known words of St. Paul more appropriate than in this connexion—"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness." From the Marxist standpoint Christian doctrine is simply folly; and for the Christian, Marxism is the "wisdom of this world" and "of the princes of this world, that come to nought."

[1] F. Stepun.

There exist within Christianity several attempts at solving the problem of the relation between this world and the other. The most thoroughgoing of these attempts, asceticism, held life in this world to be of no account, and saw significance in earthly existence only in so far as it was a transition to another life. A more moderate solution sought to define the purpose of human existence in terms of the revelation through faith of its relation to a life beyond. There has always existed in the Christian tradition, however, the tendency to conceive of the Kingdom of God as an exclusively earthly system, a city of God on earth, a kind of earthly New Jerusalem. The Eastern Church found fault with the Roman Catholic Church because it believed its doctrines and dogmas to contain the seed of a false interpretation of the Christian faith. It was Dostoievski's belief that the whole of French Socialism was nothing but a further development of this erroneous Roman Catholic idea. In our opinion, however, this conception is not specifically Roman, but rather Jewish, in so far as the doctrine of the New Jerusalem on earth has the worldly power of the Messiah as the basis of it. This makes it easier to understand why certain Christian sects, both in the East and in the West (Hussites, Taborites, and many Protestant sects) have remained closer in spirit to the Old Testament and have been attracted to the idea of a New Jerusalem on earth and even to religious communism. It is to this type of thought that, generally speaking, the more recent apostles of the earthly New Jerusalem, from the French utopian socialists to Weitling, G. Kulman, and others, belong. Considered in the broadly historical sense, Marxism has also sprung out of this soil, but, in contrast to Religious and Christian Socialism, it has completely detached the Kingdom of God from the idea of God, and has introduced in its stead the new elements which have been described. Some of these may approach

the Christian idea of man, but others show how far removed it is from Marxism.

(c) *The third fundamental difference between Christianity and Marxism lies in the fact that it is impossible to sever the idea of personality from Christian anthropology, whereas this does not constitute an essential element in the Marxist conception of man.*

We know that throughout the history of Christian philosophy there have existed several theories of human nature. Even those which were furthest removed from a philosophical "personalism" (for example, those which rejected the idea of man as an individual hypostasis and, so to speak, dissolved him into a series of relations) were more "personalistic" than Marxism. For such types of thought, man in his relation to God, as a being created "in the Word," is essentially a responsible creature, that is, a "centre" of responsible and free decisions, being called upon to determine the direction of his own life. This sense of responsibility constitutes the real nature of man, but it is completely absent from Marxism. Man, according to the latter philosophy, has no personal centre of his own: he is only one of a number of relations for that to which man is related is society, which is not personal (as God is personal) but only a sum-total of relations. This constitutes a great difference between the conception of relations as found in Marxism and those of which Christian doctrine speaks, for the latter relations are only to be understood in terms of the relation of the Creator to the creature. Created man is nothing other than a reproduction of the original pattern which remains the same. God created man in His own image: which presupposes that the original always overshadows the image. If God is a "person" in the fullest sense of the word, it follows that man is a kind of "reduced" person, and not only by virtue of his imperfection, but even after his resurrection in the

Kingdom of God, where he does not become God but only appears in a closer relationship to Him. This gives rise to an unbridgeable gulf between the Christian and the Marxist conceptions of human nature, for the Marxist man is not created after any pattern. He is moulded according to the model which evolves during the historical process and as a result of the progressive march of humanity. The dominating classes and individuals, bearers of historical ideals, create in their own class-consciousness the conception of a perfect man, which has never yet existed and which is yet to be born. They try to appropriate for themselves the prerogative of the creator. Yet our examination of Marxist teaching about the incidental nature of personality has convinced us that the Marxist man is a far more ephemeral creature than the Christian "image of God." And it is here—in the practical attitude towards man—that the enormous difference between Marxism and Christianity comes out very plainly, The social practice of Marxism knows only one problem:[1] the transformation of the irrational, non-essential qualities conferred by the process of history on the individual of bourgeois culture into the "accidental" ones of Marxism, and the creation, by means of a radical reconstruction of social conditions, of the perfect human personality. The real historical man is here not an end in himself, not an ultimate value, but only an instrument for the purpose of creating the society of the future; merely material to be operated on by society. Reference is often made, of course, to the fact that historical Christianity has also had its periods of terrorism. But Christian terrorism does not arise out of the foundation of its teaching, that is, out of the Gospels, but is a denial of it; whereas the Marxist principle of moulding

[1] For other problems, however, see Plekhanov, *Fundamental Problems of Marxism*, Eng. Trans., Martin Lawrence, 1929.—Translator's note.

the individual into something impersonal is a natural consequence of its tenets. According to the Christian ethic each man is of worth for his own sake, a conception which Marxism resolutely repudiates. The Christian ethic is one of loving one's neighbour; it is not an ethic which is derived from the historically determined, relative values of human existence.

(d) *The fourth fundamental difference between Christianity and Marxism consists in the complete rejection by the latter of the idea of the "inner man," whereas this constitutes the foundation of the Christian conception of man.*

"For behold, the Kingdom of God is within you": this declaration is the basis of the Christian religion and of the conception of man which is based upon it. The Marxist "kingdom of God on earth" is, on the contrary, nothing more than an external economic organization by reason of which a new form of consciousness will emerge as a "reflex and echo" of the new economic basis of life. The problem of the specifically inner and spiritual character of human nature lies completely outside the whole of Marxist teaching and the logical Marxist proletarian or intellectual. What is there of practical worth for militant Marxism in the following words of Christ: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" The Marxist, on the contrary, wants to win the whole world, and as for his soul he does not trouble about it. The man who, in St. Paul's phrase, is "precious in the sight of God," "the hidden man of the heart," only provokes a pitying smile in the Marxist. Once for all we must remind ourselves that in this respect there is an unfathomable abyss not only between Marxism and Christianity, but between Marxism and all other religions and philosophies which recognize the spiritual nature of man, whether it be Hinduism or Platonism or any other. Marxism

belongs wholly to the type of civilization which has lost all understanding of the problems of man's inner life. For this reason such ideas as an inner ethical imperative or responsibility to God or to one's conscience are entirely foreign to Marxism. The Marxist ethic, as we have seen, is simply a class-ethic, that is one which deliberately rejects what St. Paul describes as the "fruit of the Spirit," namely "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."[1] For the thoroughgoing Marxist these are neither virtues nor vices (because he has no room for such terminology): they are only ideological principles which divert the energies required for the class-war and are therefore to be cast aside. In the class-struggle, as in every other, "hatred, strife, jealousies, wraths, faction, divisions, envyings, murders,"[2] are far more necessary. It must be understood, once for all, that we are here once more faced with a fundamental contradiction between the Marxist and the Christian idea of man.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS.

In the development of our subject we have placed before us two different aims: a theoretical and a practical. In pursuing these aims we desired above all to remain on philosophical ground, on which alone any discussion between Marxism and Christianity is possible. We believe in the ultimate truth of Christianity as a religion, and are convinced that Christianity includes whatever is true and genuine in Marxism. But fundamentally religious faith only embodies such "true and genuine" values in the philosophically potential state. It would be scarcely possible to assert that, in what concerns the actualization of what is only potential, all the various philosophies

[1] Galatians v. 22. [2] Galations v. 20–21.

which have arisen on Christian soil and have dealt with ethical and social doctrines contain the ultimate truth and are in no need of improvement. In the "anteroom" of the Christian faith, that is, in philosophy, any claim to possess absolute truth is unfounded and false. The familiar attempt made by representatives of Christian thought to prove that all the social and philosophical doctrines of socialism are implicit in Christian philosophy has led to an exaggeration. For it is a serious error, often committed by historical Christianity, to elevate any theological, philosophical, or social-ethical teaching to the position of an absolute truth which can never be surpassed; or to proclaim any one Christian teacher as alone orthodox; but it is this practice which Marxism has taken over from historical Christianity. Oriental theosophy showed far greater wisdom by acting in accordance with the "synthetic" spirit in its dealings with the differing, though fundamentally orthodox, philosophical doctrines, rather than in the spirit of exclusiveness which demanded the outlawing of heresies. Thus if we agree that Christian philosophy does not necessarily contain truths which should be regarded as absolute, we should concede that other philosophical, ethical, and social ideas which have not sprung from Christian belief may be instructive. What truths there are in many non-Christian ideas are often the result of the sins of historical Christianity, and the willingness of Christian thinkers to be instructed by them is actually equivalent to the admission of their own sins. From this point of view the foregoing investigations possess a certain theoretical importance for Christian philosophy and from them the following conclusions may be drawn:

1. The disappearance of German idealistic philosophy, which formed the highest point in the spiritual development of Europe in its most bourgeois period, and the

"anthropological reaction" against idealism, are to be welcomed from the Christian standpoint, inasmuch as a concrete idea of man replaced abstractions such as Fichte's "Ich" and Hegel's "absolute idea."

2. The thought which emerged conspicuously in the post-hegelian philosophy, that the problem of man is of far greater importance to philosophy than other philosophical questions (e.g., time, space, causality, etc.) is also justifiable from the Christian standpoint and should constitute a point of departure for a Christian philosophical study of man.

3. Acceptable also are the modifications which Marxism, and those philosophical doctrines which are related to it, have made of the old Aristotelian and Thomist view of man as an "animal sociale et rationale." Such modifications have been introduced by the appreciation of the function of labour and technics, the conception of the social nature of man, the relation of the latter to the perfect society of the future, etc.

4. Particularly acceptable are the ethico-social conclusions drawn from the above-mentioned social philosophy which involve a vindication of the need for a radical, social, and economic reconstruction of modern bourgeois society and the interests of exploited social classes. The greatest sin of the Christian Churches is that they have hitherto defended the capitalist order of society and have thus sided with the possessors of power against the oppressed.

The justification of one section of the philosophical content of Marxism requires of us an unambiguous formulation of what, in Marxism, is unacceptable from the point of view of Christian philosophy, and cannot under any circumstances be adopted by the Christian:

1. The materialist-naturalistic form of the philosophical reaction against a one-sided idealism.

2. The fundamentally anti-personal attitude of Marxist teaching, and the conception of man as the sum-total of social-economic relations, which are incompatible with such ideas as responsibility, inner spiritual life, ethical autonomy, etc.

3. The thoroughgoing identification of the individual with the universal, and the complete absorption of the individual personality by the community. In a sinful world personality must necessarily maintain a certain amount of independence over against society, for only in the Kingdom of God can the individual be absorbed into the community without damage to himself.

4. The conception of religion as an "opiate for the people," which forms the foundation of Marxist militant atheism.

These are the major points which the Marxist must abandon if there is to be any *modus vivendi* between Marxists and Christians, who are obliged to live together in the same society, and who, in the light of the contacts described above, can to some extent work together in the same direction. The Christian should and can participate with the Marxist in the reconstruction of the world and in the realization of social justice. The question of how, while engaged in co-operating in such a task, the inevitable collision arising out of the fundamental antagonisms of the two doctrines can be avoided, is one which lies outside the scope of this essay. The Christian, however, must not forget one thing: to remain faithful to himself, and not try to adapt himself to ideas which are foreign to him.

*PART II*

# THE CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING OF MAN

*by*

EMIL BRUNNER

# THE CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING OF MAN

## INTRODUCTION

THE Christian doctrine of man is one section of Christian theology as a whole and can only be understood against this background. All that the Bible says about man which is essential and obligatory for faith is indissolubly connected with that which it declares about the nature and the Will of God, about the nature of the Trinity, and the eternal divine decrees, about Creation, Atonement and Redemption on the basis of His revelation. The word of God, in which man has the ground of his being, is also the ground of knowledge for all that we are, both ideally and actually. It has only been possible to suggest these general theological presuppositions in this paper; indeed at every point this whole sketch of the Christian doctrine of man needs to be more fully developed.[1]

The doctrine of man does not occupy a prominent position in the Bible; the Bible is far more concerned with God and His Kingdom than with man and his fulfilment. At the same time this God is always the God of man, who reveals His nature to man, and wills to assert His Will in the life of man. To a limited extent the Bible is anthropocentric, on a theocratic and theocentric basis. It is concerned with the God who became man, and with man whose aim it is to become like Him—the "God-Man." But there is a sense in which we can say that the doctrine of man does

[1] The full exposition of my thought on this subject will be found in the book which I published recently under the title *Der Mensch im Widerspruch* (Furche-Verlag), Berlin, 1937. The present paper is merely a brief summary of the main points of the book. Owing to its fragmentary character it can only be regarded as a passing discussion. The reader will find that many of the questions and objections which arise in his mind have already been raised and, so far as it lay in his power, answered by the author himself in the larger work.

occupy a privileged position in comparison with the other doctrines in the Bible, since its theme is of the greatest interest to the natural man. Even those who have no interest in God and His Kingdom are interested in the question of man; indeed even those who do not dream of the divine destiny of man are concerned with the question of the destiny of man as a whole. It is the task of a Christian anthropology to show that it is impossible to understand man save in the light of God.

The central thesis of this article may be stated thus: man is a "theological" being, that is, that his ground, his goal, his norm, and the possibility of understanding his own nature are all in God.

The Christian understanding of man, however—like the Christian message as a whole—in relation to man's own knowledge of himself is both positive and negative, missionary and polemical. The Bible does not assert that man is unable to gain a true knowledge of himself by means of his reason, by means of his natural methods of acquiring knowledge, by the simple experience of life, by means of scientific research, and by means of philosophical thought. On the contrary, in a decisive passage, it affirms: "who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" (1 Cor. ii. 11). The Bible always presupposes man's natural and valid knowledge of himself; for instance, there is no reason to reject the results of physical anthropology, anatomy, physiology, biochemistry or even psychology, sociology or philosophical anthropology. Even the most rigid Christian teachers, like the Reformers, never questioned the validity and the necessity of a purely rational natural doctrine of man. All that is the subject of human research, such as the psycho-physical structure of man, his psycho-physical development within time and space, both as an individual and as a member of a species, the relations between body and

mind, the laws of human thought, as well as the facts of human history, is not derived from revelation, especially from its original source in the Holy Scriptures, but from the particular science which deals with that special sphere of life or with that particular sphere of competent thought. In principle there is no conflict between a scientific and a Christian anthropology since the point of view from which each looks at man is quite different. All that, in principle, is accessible to experience within time and space is not a matter of faith but of science; faith, for instance, never competes with a scientific theory which seeks to explain how the human race came into existence, or the stages of its evolution. The special object of faith is the nature and the destiny of man as it is to be understood from the point of view of God, and in relation to God—to the God who discloses Himself to us in His revelation. Hence the boundary between the sphere of the knowledge accessible through faith and rational empirical knowledge can only be defined in terms of degrees. The more that is concerned with man as a whole, with that which includes not only what he is and what he ought to be but also his ultimate origin and his final goal, the more exclusive is the attitude of faith; while the more we are concerned with partial aspects of human existence the more autonomous, even from the point of view of faith, does our purely rational empirical knowledge become. There is no special science of Christian anatomy, nor is there any specially Christian science of psychology or of sense-perception, but there is a special Christian doctrine of freedom or unfreedom, of the destiny and personal existence of man, which is more or less in sharp contrast with every other view of man. Thus in principle Christian anthropology is inclusive so far as scientific anthropology is concerned, but it is exclusive so far as the anthropology of another religion or philosophy of life

is concerned. But even in this second case the relation is never purely negative, but must always be dialectical in character: no other system of religious anthropology is without a grain of truth, which affects it through and through. Since, however, the man to whom the Gospel is proclaimed is never without a total interpretation of his own being, however unconscious this may be, and of his own destiny, Christian anthropology is always, in the sense of that dialectic, aggressive and eager to get into touch with man. It is essential to it, therefore, that it should always carry on discussions with its rivals.

## THE PROBLEM FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF MAN

1. We all think we know what man is. But what man really is, is the great question of the ages. Not in vain were the words "Know thyself" inscribed on the Temple of Apollo as the epitome of ultimate wisdom. Were man only a piece of the world—one object among many other objects—as was suggested by a certain kind of positivistic Natural Science of last century—the problem of man would simply be one problem among many others, and not even one of the greatest. But man is also the subject, to whom all objective problems are presented as questions, or *objecta*. To enquire into the nature of man means enquiring into the mind or the spirit from which all questioning springs. All problems are *human* problems, and all interests are human interests. Therefore the secret of man extends to the ultimate depths of existence; we cannot understand man aright unless we take into consideration both the primal origin and the final end of all things. For man can never be understood merely from that which he may be empirically at any given moment; his existence includes his destiny. The specifically *human* element consists in being constantly disturbed and, at least in part, determined

by the idea of destiny, of obligation. Thus from the very outset every merely empirical solution of the problem is hopeless; positivism is not merely *not* a metaphysic, it is bad metaphysics. It cuts away the very roots of human existence.

2. Since the *question* of man—from the point of view of the theory of knowledge—is fundamentally different from all others, the *answer* to the question of its *practical* significance cannot be compared with any others. The way in which men understand themselves decides what their lives will be.

A dead thing, a living plant, even an animal, is what it is simply as it has been produced by nature. It does not understand itself, and it does not alter its life in accordance with its understanding of itself. Both these elements, self-knowledge and self-determination, are the wonderful and dangerous privileges of human existence. *Man is the being who understands himself and in this self-understanding decides or determines what he will do and be.* This is true, whether this understanding of himself be right or wrong, superficial or profound. Differences of view about the nature of man create different ways of living, different civilizations and cultures, different political, economic, and social systems. Every form of culture, every civilization, every legal system, every form of economic order, every style in art, every kind of constitution of a state—whatever else it may be—is also a product of a definite view of man. The great differences between the culture and civilization of the ancient Chinese Empire, of ancient India, and of classical Greece and Rome, were not only due to geographical, climatic, and racial causes; above all they were due to the fact that the Indian, the Chinese, the Greek, and Roman had such a different view of his own nature—that is, of human existence as a whole. Thus—to take only one definite illustration—the doctrine

of the *jus naturale* of late antiquity, which is based upon the Stoic conception of man, has been one of the elements which has helped to determine the formation of a legal system, and of political theory and action in Europe, for centuries down to the French Revolution, and even on into the period of modern Socialism and Communism. Again, the view of women and children, which sprang from the Christian conception of man, has not only influenced social views, but it has also affected the creation of institutions, down to the modern legislation for the protection of the workers. The most powerful of all spiritual forces is man's view of himself, the way in which he understands his nature and his destiny, indeed it is the one force which determines all the others which influence human life. For in the last resort, all that man thinks and wills springs out of what he thinks and wills about himself, human life, its meaning and its purpose.

3. There are many different conceptions of man; it would be an impossible task to try to assemble them and then to classify them. There are as many views of man as there are human beings. Myth and poetry, philosophical, scientific and religious doctrine are all in some way or another wrestling with this problem, and trying to find a solution to this question, which concerns us so nearly, and is yet at the same time one of the most disturbing and tormenting questions of human life. And yet when we look into the subject a little more closely, we perceive that this infinite variety can be reduced to a few main types, although within each type it is possible to distinguish countless varieties. In order to perceive the distinctive element in the Christian doctrine of man we shall find that it will be useful and indeed necessary to give a rapid survey of the other rival views of man. Behind the discussion between Christianity and Marxism (respecting

Communism), and between the Christian and the Fascist claim for totalitarian obedience, stands the conflict between the Christian view of man and a rationalistic or romantically vitalistic view of man. The abstract discussion on which we are here engaged is already a vital issue in the political and ecclesiastical sphere.

(*a*) The simplest, the least mysterious and the most primitive form of anthropology is the view which regards man as part of this world, especially of the animal world; according to this view man is either a highly developed or (according to the latest theory) a most degenerate animal. This conception should not be confused with the process of purely scientific research into the nature of man—that is, with the methods of natural science—which is called the anthropology of natural science. For scientific anthropology as such does not claim to give a total explanation of man's being, in competition with an idealistic or Christian anthropology; it merely contemplates a definite aspect of human existence without taking a definite position either negatively or positively on the question whether man is more than this object, which is being studied in this way from the point of view of natural science, or not. We make a sharp distinction between scientific research in terms of natural science and a naturalistic metaphysic, thus also between a naturalistic anthropology and the anthropology of natural science. The naturalistic view is expressed in various forms. Its crudest expression is the materialistic variety, which conceives man as a being composed of material elements, and the mental and spiritual life either as a secretion or as a kind of electro-magnetic effect of these material elements. Biological naturalism is certainly more modern; it refrains from reducing all that is non-physical to the material plane, suggesting, however, that all spiritual values spring from vital values, that all

spiritual norms are derived from functions of adaptation, and that all spiritual truths are merely practical and useful methods to help man to adapt himself to his sense environment; in so doing it denies the independent reality of morality and of religion. All that is higher is for it only a product of a far-reaching differentiation of the same *one* vital element; man is "simply" an animal of a highly differentiated kind.

(*b*) The second fundamental view starts from the opposite end, from the spirit, as something which is totally different from natural existence. Man differs from the animal precisely because he studies *natural science*, because he has a desire to enquire into the truth as truth, because he cares not only about what is useful but about what is just and good and holy. The philosophy of Greek Idealism —that is, that idealism which had not yet been influenced by Christian ideas, which spring from an entirely different source—regarded this *spiritual nature* of man as a *divine nature*, as a kind of substantial relationship, a participation in the divine reason. Thus the fundamental being of man is not animal but divine. The physical part of man is something foreign to his nature, it is a sort of relic which is not essential to human existence. Alongside of this boldly speculative idealism there is also a kind of moderate idealism, which, although it asserts the impossibility of deriving the spirit and its values and norms from any kind of sense data, does not proceed, from this standpoint, to the conclusions of the philosophy of religion: for it the spiritual values and norms are the ultimate; man is regarded essentially as the bearer and moulder of these laws and values, the distinctively "human" element is participation in this "spirit," this "reason." In saying this I am not taking into consideration the fact that very often this kind of idealism is combined with the Christian view of creation and of personality.

(*c*) Just as the first view starts from the body, and the second from the spirit, so the third view starts from the "soul". The romantic and mystical theory believes that behind the contrast between nature and spirit it can discern the original source of both, free from all contradictions, a principle of ideality, which manifests itself in the human "soul", in its feeling, in its intuition, in its mystical experience of unity. The essential distinctive element in man lies neither in his physical nor in his spiritual nature, but in his half-unconscious "soul"; there man is close to the heart of the All, there he lives by the life of the All. This is the source of his creative existence, and the creative element is the distinctive quality of humanity. It is of the essence of this romantic, mystical anthropology that its conceptions cannot possibility be as clear and distinct as the two others; thus we find its adherents not so much among people of a scientific turn of mind or among philosophers, as among people who seek to find the meaning of their lives in *feeling* rather than in *thought*, or among those to whom art, above all, is the starting-point for their understanding of the riddle of existence.

Each of these three fundamental views is based on principle, that is, each looks at man as a whole, in the light of one single principle of interpretation either from the point of view of natural existence, or from that of the spirit, or from that of intuition and feeling. The fact that each of these views is so unified and coherent gives each its special strength and impressiveness; at the same time, however, it also gives it its particular weakness and makes its interpretation appear rather forced. Hence at all periods of history the most varied syntheses and combinations have been essayed; even to mention them here, however, is impossible. But in spite of all the keenness and profundity with which these views have been elaborated, none of them has been able to make the enduring impression of

their more one-sided rivals, and the most forceful thinkers have always inclined to the more one-sided solutions.

(*d*) There is, however, a fourth type of anthropology which ought to be mentioned; owing to the fact that it cannot be systematically presented it is usually ignored. The simple man—even when he is not conscious of it—always possesses a more or less *synthetic* anthropology—neither naturalistic, nor idealistic, nor mystical—but a view which takes those three fundamental categories of interpretation into account and applies them in an unsystematic, naïve way, more or less profoundly, but also in a more or less arbitrary manner. The non-philosophical man takes for granted that man is "composed of body, mind, and spirit," and yet that he is a unity, but of the why and the wherefore of all this he knows nothing. He sees the animal and the material side of man, but he also sees the "higher" side of man: the sense of a spiritual destiny, a sense of obligation, something normative and significant. He sees the contrast between what is and what ought to be, between the eternal aspect of man's destiny and the fact of death, he sees that man is both bound and free, but he sees this without really knowing what it all means, without being able to give a clear account of man which is based upon ultimate truth. He knows himself as man, but he does not know what it means to be human.

All science, philosophy and religion builds upon this naïve, pre-reflective understanding of man, by developing this fundamental self-understanding of man in all kinds of ways, deepening, transforming, and even distorting it. The Christian message is also related to this simple understanding of man.

### THE OBJECT OF CHRISTIAN ANTHROPOLOGY

Although the Biblical view of man does not spring from natural experience or from rational thought but from

the Divine revelation, yet its object is simply man as he actually is, the empirical man. Its aim is to throw light upon the mystery of this man, that is, upon ourselves whom everyone knows—and yet does not know—that mystery which, to some extent, everyone knows as that of the contradiction between what man is and what man ought to be.

When we pierce to the heart of these things we see clearly that the one characteristic which distinguishes man from all other creatures known to us is not his intellect nor his power to create culture, but this simple and impressive fact: that he is responsible and personal. If anyone could say what this responsible personal existence is, whence responsibility comes, what its aim is and why it is that the actual man is always in conflict with his true responsibility, he would have found the key to the mystery. Responsibility has a source and a goal, there is a basis for responsibility, something which makes man responsible, and there is a goal of responsibility, a fulfilment of responsibility. Man understood as a responsible person, from the very outset, is not regarded as an isolated being but as a related being; this relatedness is understood in a twofold sense. Man's relation towards that authority which makes him responsible is one of obligation; he also has a relation to the others to whom responsibility binds him. Of what character and of what origin is this twofold element which binds and unites? Why is it that man always has this twofold responsibility, and is also aware of it, and yet again that he is in opposition to it, and is not rightly aware of it?

None of the "natural" doctrines which have already been outlined, doctrines which man has evolved from his own inner consciousness, can give any real answer to this question, which is the central question of human existence as a whole. Naturalism has no idea of responsibility, since

it knows no authority which can make man responsible. Idealism may indeed seek to produce such an authority in some spiritual law or value; but it is unable to explain why it is that man is in conflict with his own sense of responsibility. All it does is to substitute two principles for the "contradiction": a "higher" and a "lower" principle in man; this simply destroys the unity of personality as well as responsibility for the "contradiction." The mystical romantic doctrine evades both the problem of personal existence and that of responsibility. The simple human being, it is true, has some sense of responsibility, and is also dimly aware of the presence of the contradiction; but he has no idea either of its source or its significance.

The Christian revelation does give an answer to this central question, and it does so in such a pointed way that we who always tend either to evade it or to depreciate its significance are obliged to recognize its vital importance. The Christian revelation answers this question by showing that the source of man's responsibility is the same as its content, namely, unselfish, spontaneous love; it is this love which makes him responsible, and it is this love again which he owes to his neighbour. Further, the Christian answer, where it reveals the nature of true responsibility also reveals the actual depth of the contradiction in man as he actually is. Finally, the Christian answer, by unveiling the secret of human personality, is able both to achieve the removal of the contradiction and the restoration of integral personality and union with persons. This is the content and the meaning of the three following statements, in which the whole Christian doctrine of man may be summed up:

(i) Man has been created in the image of God—*Imago Dei.*

(ii) Through sin man has come to be in a state of opposition to his divine destiny—*peccatum originis.*

(iii) In Jesus Christ—who reveals to man both his original nature and his contradiction—in this actual revelation, man is restored to his original unity—*restitutio imaginis.*

These statements are statements of faith, that is, they do not claim to be capable of rational proof; on the contrary, they spring from the Divine revelation alone and therefore they can only be grasped as truth in faith. But since they refer to the actual man and unveil the secret of the contradiction in human nature, and at the same time remove it by faith, they also claim that no experience and no correct ways of thinking can contradict them, but that, on the contrary, through them both are placed in their right context. The Word of God does not contradict reason, but it places it within its right context, which it cannot find of itself, and it ruthlessly lays bare all sham reason.

### THE DOCTRINE OF THE *IMAGO DEI*

1. The first truth the Christian concept of the *Imago Dei* implies is this: that it is impossible to understand man in the light of his own nature; man can only be understood in the light of God. The relation between the knowledge of God and that of man is different from the relation between the knowledge of God and that of a thing—a bit of the world—because the relation between God and man is different from the relation between God and a thing. The belief that God is the Creator of all things is of course fundamental to the thought of the Bible, and is an integral part of the Christian message. But this does not mean that because this is God's relation to the universe, His relation to mankind is exactly the same. Israel knew Yahweh first

of all as "Lord" and only after that as the Creator of the world. I can only understand what the creation of the world means when I know what God's attitude toward me is, that is, that God is my Lord. Because God addresses me in His Word as the Lord I know that God the Lord is the Creator. The Biblical idea of Creation is not a rational, metaphysical theory of the origin of the world. From the very outset, the Biblical idea of Creation includes the special relation of God to man, namely, that God reveals Himself to man in His Word as the Lord.

The God who reveals Himself is always the God whose face is turned towards man; the *theanthropos theos*. The God whom we, as Christians, call the Creator is the God who reveals Himself to man; He is indeed the God who unveils the mystery of God in the mystery of man, the God who unveils both the mystery of God and the mystery of man in the Incarnation of the Word. The God who first of all and in a special way has to do with man, the God who shows Himself to man as the Lord, is the Creator.

The converse, therefore, is also true: the being which is related to God in a special way—in a way in which no animal, no plant, and still more no dead thing is related to God—is man. Hence the knowledge of man is very different from that of a thing or an animal. It is possible to describe a "thing" very fully without remembering that it is a creature made by God. The fact that it has been created is not essential for the understanding of its nature. But when we come to man the whole situation is quite different. Of course it is possible to study human anatomy without thinking of God; but it is not possible to describe the specifically human element in man, that which is peculiar to man as such, in contradistinction from everything else, without gaining a glimpse of the "dimension of God." The dis-

tinctively human element in man is not a state of existence which can be described independently of the relation to God; it contains something peculiar which defies isolated description, that is, the element of transcendence. In the very fact that man seeks a ground and a meaning for his existence he transcends himself. Every specifically human act, since it is related to a ground and a meaning, is an act of transcendence. Ultimately this ground and this aim always ends in God. Man—whether he will or no—is always a "theological" being, that is, he is a being whose natural tendency is to seek after the Ultimate; it is this tendency which stirs him to thought and enquiry.

This does not mean that the idea of God can be added to human existence like any other idea, so that it would be possible to describe the nature of man or the idea of God or man's relation with God as independent entities. No, the truth is that the specific element in man, the human element, always contains this relation to God; thus every view of man which ignores this relation to God fails to perceive the specific element in human existence. In speaking of man's "relation to God" I mean not only religion, but something which forms part of every human act, whether it be legal, artistic, scientific, moral, or religious. The more an act is concerned with man as a whole—that is, is a central or a total act—the more clearly man's relation to God appears. But man is not directly aware of this fact, and even when he does become aware of it, he is still far from being in a position to perceive the basis and significance of this truth.

The Bible proclaims this truth when it says that man can only understand his being, that is, the distinctive character of his human existence, from the God who reveals Himself in His Word. The being of man is related to God, and indeed, to put it more exactly, man's existence has been posited by God as related to Him; thus man's relatedness

to God is first of all a relation of God to man, and on the basis of that alone is it a relation of man to God.

2. The more detailed doctrine of the Bible concerning the specific being of man is that man, and man alone, has been created "in the image of God." What the passage (Gen. i. 26) (where this expression occurs for the first time) meant in the mind of the author in his own day, is not so important as the explicit and implicit understanding of this phrase in the whole view of man in the Old Testament and in the New. The Biblical concept of man appears not only where this phrase, the "image of God," is actually used; but wherever it is suggested that man is like God or that there is any analogy between man and God, this truth is implied. Now, however, we must make this question more pointed: In what sense can we speak of such an analogy, of such a relation? How are we to understand this parabolical method of speech?

The best and the most illuminating comment on this statement is the saying of Paul: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. iii. 18). Man bears within his own nature an image of God because and in so far as God "looks at" him His "image" is a kind of reflection. But far more relevant for the thought of the Bible than this expression, which is drawn from the aesthetic sphere, is that of the "Word." Man's distinctive quality consists in the fact that God turns to him and addresses him. In this "address" God gives man his distinctive human quality. Even the image of Christ is pre-eminently one that has been imparted through the Word; the same relation which Paul describes under the figure of an "image," in the passage which has just been quoted, he describes at other points by the more illuminating and definite idea of the "Word," to which, on the part of man,

there corresponds hearing, understanding, and believing. Thus—this is the fundamental view of the Bible—man gains his distinctiveness, his truly human nature, by the fact that God speaks to him and that man in faith receives this Word and answers it with the "Yes" of faith. In ordinary language we express this by saying that man is the being who is responsible. This is his distinctively human quality, to be a being who is responsible to God.

The idea of responsibility is primarily a general concept. It is an idea which is not confined to the world of Christian thought. Every human being has some idea of responsibility, and every one is aware—in some way or another—that he is responsible. Further: every human being is aware, even if only very dimly, that this fact of responsibility means something which affects the totality of his life, and the particular quality and destiny of man as man. Animals have no sense of responsibility. Man always possesses responsibility, and—this too should be taken into account in thinking of the general knowledge of man's responsibility—in *all* that he does he is responsible, even if he himself is "irresponsible," that is, even if he acts without recognizing his responsibility, or even in opposition to it.

But whatever man's *general* sense of responsibility may include or not, the *Christian* doctrine is related to it in a twofold way: that of critical denial and fulfilment. Man is not informed: "You know nothing about responsibility!" but: "all that you know about responsibility already, in a dim and confused way, the Word of God reveals to you as the fact that you have been created in the Word of God."

The point at issue is responsible *existence*. It is not that man receives responsibility as a quality to be added to his human existence; but responsible existence is the same thing as truly human existence. This does not mean that

the idea of responsibility covers *everything* about human existence, but it does emphasize the distinctively human element in human existence. It is true, of course, that man possesses anatomical and biological peculiarities which distinguish him from those creatures which are nearest to him in the scale of creation, and give him an advantage over them. Above all, however, he differs from all other creatures known to us in his mental and spiritual nature. But these differences are not unconditional and clear-cut; there are transitions. The one thing which distinguishes man unconditionally from the sub-human world is this, that he, and he alone, is a person. But even this distinction is not unconditional unless we define the idea of the person more plainly by describing him as *the* responsible being. This brings us into the Biblical sphere where man is called the "Image of God."

3. The Bible expresses the distinctive quality of man by saying that he stands in a special relation to God, that the relation between God and man is that of "over-against-ness"; that it consists in being face to face with each other. God created man as the being to whom He turns, so that man also turns towards Him. The *anthropo-tropos theos*—the God who is turned towards man—creates the *theo-tropos anthropos*—the man who is related to God. This becomes clearer when we fill this formal definition with content. The God who is love creates man out of love, in love, for love. Thus the Divine love is both the basis and the aim of responsibility; and it is both the basis and the content of the specific and genuine nature of man. Both the origin and the meaning of man's existence lie in the love of God. Man has been created in order that he may return the love which the Creator lavishes upon him, as responsive love; that he may respond to the Creator's word of love with the grateful "Yes" of acceptance; thus man receives his human existence from God when

he perceives that his being and his destiny are existence in the love of God.

This act of recognition, by receiving the love of God, is what the Bible calls faith. Faith which receives love and is active in love is not something which is added to the being of man, but as the genuinely human, originally created relation between man and God, it is at the same time true responsibility, and thus the true nature of man. Man is not first of all a human being and then responsible; but his human existence consists in responsibility. And man is not first of all responsible and then in addition he possesses a relation to God; but his relation to God is the same as his responsibility. Therefore it is his relation to God which makes man man. This is the content of the Biblical doctrine of the *Imago Dei.*

Now, however, this conception of the *Imago Dei* should not be understood to mean (as it has been from the time of Irenaeus) that the "*imago*" merely signifies a formal similarity between God and man—man as the rational being, the fact that man is a subject or a person in the sense of a *natura rationalis.* Rather that is a rationalistic and individualistic transformation of the Biblical idea introduced by Greek philosophy, which turns the actual relation between God and man into a mere resemblance. The distinctive element in the anthropology of the Bible is the fact that it draws the being of man into the *actus* of God. Man is what he is, as *reactio* to the *actio* of God. Formally, God's being is *actus purus* or *absolutus*; materially it is groundless, spontaneous love; formally, man's original being is *actus relativus*; materially, it is responsive love.

The relation between the two, however, may be thus described; love imparts itself in the determinative Word, and human love replies in an act of self-determination and acceptance. Formally, the difference between human beings and all other creatures is that man is not only what

he is posited, but he is also what he posits himself, by his own response. Materially, this means that he is intended for participation in the love of God by the acceptance of this original Divine intention. His "self" exists in the Divine Word of love; and he has this Word in the obedience of "faith which worketh through love." This fundamental determination of man's nature, however, contains yet another element..

Human existence in love cannot be expressed in a concrete way towards God Himself. To love—in the sense of *Agape* and not of *Eros*—means to love only "as God loves." God does not love that which is precious to Him; He does not love in the sense of *Eros*, that is, as searching for or finding value, but His love consists in giving value. His loving does not consist in an attraction to something valuable, but it consists in giving Himself away. God does not, like *Eros*, love the "rich," but the "poor." His love is the very opposite of craving. But the man who is living in the love of God cannot love God like this. He cannot give anything to God. Therefore God gives him his fellow-man as the recipient of this love. "Love Me, in giving thy love to this thy fellow-man. Love him in My stead, out of love to Me!" Man's love of God must therefore find concrete expression in the love of his neighbour. This is not stated as a command; it is the very essence of love to go "downward," not "upward." The twofold commandment of the love of God and the love of man expresses the original law of human existence. This means that the original being of man, from the very outset, and not merely afterwards, is related to the Thou. The nature of man is not, as Greek individualism regards it, first of all a *natura rationalis*, and then possibly this *anima rationalis* may also come into contact with others of the same kind; but the original nature of man is "actual", like that of the lightning which extends from one pole to the other. Just as God's Being is *actus absolutus*,

so the being of man is *actus relativus*, on the basis of the Divine *actus absolutus*; it is responsive actuality. The "substance" of human existence is responsible love. This responsive actuality is only possible by means of the fact that man has spirit; spiritual existence is only possible by means of the fact that mind exists; the mind only exists upon a biophysical basis. Thus personal existence in responsibility is based upon something else; it has a substratum. But we cannot understand human existence from the point of view of the substratum, but, on the contrary, we must understand the substratum from the point of view of personal existence, for only from the point of view of the person do we understand man as a whole. Where we say "person" the Bible says "heart," and by that it means the personal totality in its essential relation to God and to the neighbour.

### MAN AS SINNER

1. The second main article of belief in a Christian anthropology is that man is a sinner, that is, that his actual existence is diametrically opposed to his origin. Here too we are concerned with human existence as a personal whole. Man does not merely "commit" sins, and he does not merely "have" sins, he *is* a sinner. His opposition to his original creation does not merely affect "something in him" but himself. But just as his original existence is actual existence, so also his "existence-in-opposition" is actual existence. The fact that man is a whole does not contradict his being "actual"; the "is" in the sentence "man is a sinner" is something actual; this use of the word "is" means something different from the "is" in the sentence, "the dog is a mammal," or "the sum of the angles of the triangle is 180°." The "is" which describes sinful existence is *sui generis* precisely because it describes personal exis-

tence. The doctrine of original sin, in its ecclesiastical form, expresses this truth very imperfectly, since it turns "actual" personal existence into a substantial deformity. If there is anything which according to the teaching of the Bible ought not to be conceived in a substantial manner it is sin. The distinction between original sin and sinful acts should be formulated as "actual existence which manifests itself in particular acts."

From this point of view, sin means a threefold perversion of created existence: it perverts man's relation to God, to his neighbour, and to himself. But perversion does not mean annihilation. Man has not ceased to be a person; but the original meaning of personal existence has been turned into its opposite: existence in the love of God, in faith and love, has been transformed into an existence which is opposed to God, and that is, an existence in the wrath of God; existence in the love of one's neighbour has been transformed into that selfishness which "uses" our neighbour; unified personal existence has been transformed into division of personality, "existence-in-contradiction" to man's origin.

It is as impossible to say when and how this transformation took place as it is to say when and how the Creation took place. My creation by God cannot be measured by that which takes place on the temporal plane; nor can the perversion of my being be measured by that which takes place on the temporal plane. The "Creation" and the "Fall" have a very indirect and remote connexion with what science tells us about the genesis of the causal world of time and space and the changes which take place therein. We can no more localize personal transactions between God and man in the world of time and space than we can localize the spirit of man in the brain. We ought to bear this in mind not only when we read the first chapter of Genesis, but also when we read Chapter iii. There cannot be an

"historical" account of the Creation; nor, likewise, can there be an "historical" account of the Fall. In Jesus Christ it is revealed to faith that we have been created in the Word of God, and also that we have fallen away from this our origin. As we all have this common origin—even though the human race may not be uniform from the biological point of view—, so we have all experienced this breach with our origin, and this fact determines our whole existence.

2. Therefore, if we wish to understand ourselves in the light of truth, as we actually are, we must bear these two facts in mind: the fact that we have been created in the Image of God, and the fact of the "contradiction"—that is, that we have turned against our Origin. This is the reason why our responsibility is ambiguous, and our sense of responsibility—which we possess as sinners, apart from redemption through Jesus Christ—is ambiguous. Our responsibility is now determined by three factors, which indicate the presence of the contradiction: by guilt, bondage, and the law.

*Guilt.* As sinners we are "without excuse" (ἀναπόλογήτοι, Rom. i. 20). This conception recalls the revelation of the origin and the creation of man and of the world; at the same time it also indicates the Fall, the breach in man's relation with God. We are not only "under an obligation"; we are guilty. It is guilt which most profoundly separates us from God; therefore the forgiveness of guilt constitutes the heart of the Gospel. We are utterly unable to deal with our guilt; it cannot be removed save by the intervention of God. Guilt means that the God who confronts us is no longer the loving God but the wrathful God.

*Bondage.* Sin is not merely the opposition of man's will to God, but it means such an alienation of man's nature from God that he can no longer do the will of God, indeed he does not even wish to do it. Sin is the will that is bound,

enslaved. But this bondage must not be conceived in any deterministic kind of way, but in a strictly personal and actual manner. In our *will* a hostile power is active against God. This bondage—like the "is" of sinful existence—is *sui generis*, and must not be confused with any causal relation. The Bible does not know the concept of "Original Sin" but that of "death" (*Θάνατος*), which as the power of sin enslaves the will. Both guilt and bondage, however, point to a third element: *the Law*. Through sin we are under the Law. We know God's will no longer as the will of one who loves and gives, but as that of one who demands, in a legalistic way. Thus the natural sense of responsibility is the consciousness of the "Thou Shalt." This sense of responsibility is universal; apart from faith it is the clearest indication of man's being in the Word of God and of the *Imago Dei*. But its legalistic interpretation means the perversion of this original relation. The law is the way in which the angry God makes His will known to us; it is the way in which the will of God is made known to us as sinners. Therefore the Law is the truly dialectical concept in the Christian understanding of God. Redemption is above all redemption from the law, and yet redemption takes place in the fulfilment of the law by Christ and works itself out in the—relative—fulfilment of the law on the part of man who has been born again, through the Holy Spirit. Our relation to God and our neighbour is determined by the opposition between what is and what ought to be, between what ought to be and what is desired. The content of the Law is love, and yet love and law are opposed. That which is good merely from the legalistic point of view is just as much a manifestation of the breach made by sin as that which is evil from the point of view of the law. This is the "curse of the law"; it shows the depth of the alienation of man from God. All non-Christian religion and morality—as Luther saw

with his profound intuition—is legalistic. The fact that man has this (legalistic) morality and religion is the trace of the *Imago* and of his origin; but the fact that he knows the Nature and the Will of God only in a legalistic manner is the sign of the Fall. Thus all religion and morality is twofold: it is a token of man's origin and a sign of the contradiction. Legalism makes man's relation to God and to his neighbour impersonal. Only in Jesus Christ do we perceive the Divine "Thou" and the "Thou" of our fellow-man; only in Jesus Christ—through the fact that the Word of the Origin which we have lost returns to us as the Word in which God's love is personally present—is the original personal relation, existence in the love of God, restored through faith. This is due to the fact that Jesus Christ removes the curse of the law.

3. Thus the actual man, from the point of view of Jesus Christ, that is, regarded from the point of view of his origin, is the being whose life is an "existence-in-contradiction"—the fact of his origin is contradicted by the fact of sin. This contradiction manifests itself in all genuinely human phenomena: in anxiety, in longing, in doubt, in despair, in a bad conscience. It also manifests itself in the fact that human philosophy always breaks up into contradictions: the contradiction between idealism and naturalism, pantheism and deism, determinism and indeterminism, etc. It manifests itself in the variety of religions and systems of morality, which cannot be reduced to a common denominator. It manifests itself above all in the "dialectic" of man's natural knowledge of God, namely, that we know God, and yet that we do not know Him, that we want to serve Him, and yet that we do not want to do so; that we seek Him, and yet that we flee from Him. This contradiction is peculiar to man, that is, to the "empirical," "natural" man, outside the redemption wrought by Christ.

This is particularly true of responsibility, of personal existence. No human being is without some sense of responsibility; but no human being exists who really knows what responsibility is, and certainly no one really lives a responsible existence. For to live as a truly responsible being would indeed be the same as living in the love of God. A human being without any sense of responsibility would not only be a human being in whom man's relation to God had become distorted; it would have been destroyed; he would have become wholly inhuman. A truly responsible human being would be one wholly united to God, truly humane. Our human existence always contains elements of inhumanity; and in all inhumanity there still exists a spark of humanity. It is the same with our existence as persons. We are personal; but our personal existence is always at the same time impersonal; we are dominated by abstractions; we make the human element the means of the impersonal—civilization, the State, the power of "something." Indeed we ourselves are the slaves of "something." We seek to master God and man by means of ideas. We fall a prey to the world and its goods. The truly personal existence is the same as existence in the love of God, existence in Christ.

## PARTICULAR PROBLEMS

Having thus indicated the fundamental aspects of Christian anthropology we can now attack some of the particular problems.

1. *The Individual and the Community.* One of the most important of those manifestations of the contradiction is the fact that our understanding of ourselves and of our destiny breaks up into individualism and collectivism. This contrast is one which runs through the whole his-

tory of humanity and is never settled; for man, having lost his centre, can only fly from one extreme to the other. He could only find his centre in that existence in which and for which he has been created. Individualism emphasizes the independence of the self; collectivism stresses the bond with the community, but both do this in such a way that each destroys the other. In the Word of God, however, man is wholly a person; thus he is independent. "If the Son makes you free, then are ye free indeed." Nothing stands between God and me, nothing should bind me save that which is my distinctive nature in harmony with the fact of creation; existence determined by belonging to God. True freedom means that I, as one who has been chosen, stand face to face with God as an "individual." But the same call of God (κλῆσις) which makes me free, binds me at the same time to others: the ἐκκλησία. The ἐκκλησία is not merely a community of worship, it is a perfect community of life, *communicatio omnium bonorum* (Luther). The same love which sets me free makes me a social being. Thus we perceive that a really independent and a really social existence are actually one and the same, namely, existence in love. Faith, which accepts the love of God, and the "Church" as the community of those who believe, are correlated. All freedom is fulfilled in the "glorious liberty of the children of God," all community is fulfilled in the *communio sanctorum.* The life which is intended and given by God is both a completely independent life and a completely social life; the genuinely human element is freedom in union with God and my neighbour.

2. *Individuality and Humanity.* A second contrast which affects history is that between the universal and the particular. That which differentiates is so strongly emphasized that the common element disappers. The essential unity of humanity is denied because the particular

element of race or intellectual endowment seems to be more than a question of degree. Between barbarians and Greeks, between Aryans and non-Aryans, between the genius and the average man, there exists—so it is said—a difference of species. They are different beings. On the other hand a rationalistic humanism lays stress upon the unity of the rational nature of man to the extent of making all that is particular a matter of indifference. Cosmopolitanism and abstract humanism is the product of rationalistic periods. At the present day the two opponents are wrestling with one another in the form of the abstract idea of a world-State on the one hand and of the national or racial State on the other. Human reason is not capable of bridging this gulf. In the Divine creation of man, however, this contrast does not exist. God creates each human being with his particular qualities, but in this one particular element He is simply differentiating the one human nature common to all. In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither male nor female; yet the particular, distinctive qualities of each human being are a sign of our "creaturely" character; they also indicate that we need mutual supplementation, and that we can thus supplement each other. The unity of mankind and the distinctive character of each particular individual are both due to the Divine Creation; the meaning of the Creation is fulfilled in one truth, namely that beings who have all been created with their particular differences are made for one another. Therefore from the point of view of the Christian faith we accept neither abstract cosmopolitan humanism nor a view of race which denies the essential unity of all men. But the point of view of differentiation, of individuality, is subordinate to that of unity. The fact that every human being is responsible, that is, is called by God to be a personal being, to communion with Himself and with his fellow-men, is incomparably more im-

portant than the fact that human beings differ from one another in individuality, sex, nation, and race. Every human being has been created in the image of God, every human being is a sinner, and every one is called to faith in the Gospel of reconciliation and redemption. Within the community of the saints, the unity which has been restored in Christ, the differentiation of human beings is treated as a matter of no significance, indeed it is abolished.

3. *Spirit and Nature, Mind and Body.* Those who hold a non-Christian anthropology are unable to understand man as a psycho-physical personal unity. Either they regard him, in an idealistic way, as essentially spirit, or in a naturalistic way they regard him from the point of view of physical existence only. The Christian understanding of man is equally sharply opposed to both these alternatives, although from the very beginning of Christian theology idealist anthropology has had a great influence upon the Christian view and has done it harm. The synthesis between idealism and the faith of the Scriptures comes out in anthropology in particular as a complete misunderstanding of man. For idealism the spiritual or rational existence of man is a *participatio divinitatis*, an essential participation in the Divine Spirit or the Divine Reason. It has no idea of a personal "over-againstness" of the Divine Spirit and the spirit of Man; instead of responsibility in love and the destiny for community it presupposes the metaphysical unity of nature. This produces its ethic of respect (recognition of the presence of the same reason in the other man) and its abstract cosmopolitan humanism.

4. *The Evolution of Humanity.* When modern writers speak of a conflict between the Biblical and the scientific view of man they are usually referring to that transformation of the temporal and spatial view of the universe

connected with the name of Darwin and the idea of evolution. It is true, of course, that between the traditional Christian view of the development of the human race and this evolutionary view—which, at least in its most general sense, came to predominate in science—there certainly was an impassable gulf. And yet this problem was not a real problem at all; it was simply a problem which had been created by misunderstandings on both sides. On the side of the Church it was caused by the failure to distinguish between the Biblical picture of the universe, which was simply that of antiquity in general, and the Biblical revelation of God's nature and will. The Bible is not a text-book of natural science which tells us authoritative facts which come within the sphere of human research. The Biblical revelation is certainly embedded in a view of the universe which in many other respects, as well as in that of evolution, has ceased to be of value for us at the present day. Just as it is impossible for us to go back to the days before Newton and Copernicus to the ancient conception of the cosmos, so also it is equally impossible for us to go back to the days before Lyell and Darwin to the view of a simultaneous Divine creation of all species including man. That which takes place in time and space, or has taken place in that sphere, is, in principle, the object of research and not of faith. Faith does not exist in order to fill up the gaps in our knowledge or to compete with scientific hypotheses. Whatever we state about the creation of man by God cannot be in conflict with anything which natural science discovers as the result of careful research, because both statements are entirely incomparable. The Bible itself allows for this distinction. The poet who wrote the 139th Psalm knows very well that the individual human being comes into existence as an embryo in its mother's womb as the result of conception; but this "natural story of creation"

does not prevent him from considering the same human being, who came into existence in this natural way, as having been created by God. The Divine Creation is the background of the natural process of conception which can be discovered by research. It is true of course that the Bible did not by any means extend this idea to humanity as a whole; the picture of the universe which was accepted at that time did not provide any occasion for this. But there can be nothing to prevent *us* from doing so and from saying that the story of the natural development of mankind is the foreground of the same process whose background we call the Divine Creation.

The conflict between the two arose, however, not only as a result of misunderstandings on the side of the Church but also on the side of many of the representatives of science. The idea that the genesis of anything explains its nature is a widespread misunderstanding. To say, because man has issued from prehuman forms he is "simply" an animal, would only be legitimate if the specific nature of man could be explained as a mere differentiation of the animal element. But when we look into this question more closely we see that this is actually impossible; even if this specifically human element has been developed and shaped very gradually as the result of a long process of development, this does not mean that it is "simply" that out of which it has been shaped.

All that is required has already been said upon this subject in an earlier paper. However man may have evolved out of prehuman forms the fact remains that it can only be denied *per nefas* that the *humanum* is a distinct form of animal. Man alone is a responsible personal being; he alone knows what responsibility means; he alone is capable of perceiving the Word of God. He alone has been created "in the image of God" in order that he "may be like Him." It is true of course that even his particular mental endowments,—

his power to form ideas and to be determined by ideas—give him a distinctive place in the life of the universe, and single him out from all the sub-human creation; but the absolute breach between man and all that is not man only occurs here, at the very centre: man alone is a person. The question whence man has gained this responsible personal quality—both as an individual and in the development of mankind as a whole—is a secondary question, and it may be unanswerable. When the Bible speaks of man it always presupposes a human being who is able to assume responsibility for his own life, and is capable of following the message of His Creator with intelligence.

5. *Man in History.* Far more important than the question of evolution—which has caused so much agitation—is that of history. The Word of God has no development, but it has entered into history and has indeed become history. "The Word became flesh," the eternal Son became the Son of Man, an "accidental fact of history," just as the record of Him, that of the Bible of the Old and the New Testament, is likewise an historical record. Thus the Christian faith is essentially and not merely accidentally an historical faith. History in contrast to natural evolution is the realm of personal decision. History is the sphere where deeds are done, where decisions are taken. Likewise history—in contrast to natural development—is where we find not merely collectivities, such as species, races etc., but personal community. Responsible personal decision and personal community are the constituent elements of the historical. In both senses Jesus Christ has not only entered into history but He has at the same time fulfilled and ended history; His coming is the fulfilment of history.

Through the Word of God, through Jesus Christ, man

is rightly summoned to decision, that is, to unconditional decision, which decides everything else. For the believer time is qualified irrevocably as the time of decision in which the final decision may be taken at any moment. Faith is always concerned with the whole, with eternal life and eternal death. Faith is the turning from death to life, just as Jesus Christ Himself is the turning-point of human history, who once for all has done the decisive deed. Likewise, Jesus Christ is the bringer of truly personal community, of unconditional community. In Him alone we see humanity gathered up into a unity, into a complete solidarity of responsibility and dignity, of the guilt of sin and of redemption. One who believes in Him does not argue about "degrees of responsibility for guilt," but he takes the guilt of others on his own heart as though it were his own. One who believes in Him can no longer think about his own soul and his private salvation in an individualistic manner, but his hope reaches out to the whole of humanity in the vision of the Kingdom of God. He who belongs to Christ through faith is no longer a private individual, but he is a "member" of the "body" of which Christ is the Head. He is indissolubly united with the Church of the ages.

Just as the word of God is the true self of every individual so also the Divine Word is the meaning of history. In Jesus Christ the meaning of history has not only become evident, it has actually come. However, it has come only as that which is announced and has just begun to be realized, not as that which is fulfilled. The fulfilment of this coming is both the aim and the end of history. The goal and the meaning of each individual is that "we should be like Him"; the universally historical, supra-historical goal of humanity is that "all should be gathered up in Him" into a unity of complete communion with Him

and with one another. World history, in the sense of a universal history of humanity, has only been known since Jesus Christ, since the world has become aware of this goal towards which all tends.

Even the existence of the non-believer has been affected in a new way by Jesus Christ, by the historical revelation, from the point of view of history as a time of decision. Man after Christ is not the same as man before Christ. The Bible itself makes a distinction between the responsibility of man in the "times of ignorance" and his responsibility since the advent of the Messiah; for this coming of the Messiah—whether man believes it or not—challenges him to a decision which he was not aware of before. If he says "No" to Jesus he is not an unbeliever in the way of the pagans who lived before Christ. This "No" has become pregnant with the quality of decision since man became aware of Christ; it has a new, intensified, even if negative personal character. This is manifested in all the modern "godless" movements. Modern man, even when he decides against Christ, has an understanding of personal existence, of freedom and of responsibility, which pre-Christian man did not possess. Even anti-Christianity —though in a negative form—contains Christ and the historical nature of existence. Hence its opposition to God has an intensity which makes all pre-Christian paganism and pre-Christian atheism seem quite mild in comparison. It is anti-Christian unbelief.

### THE NEW MAN AND THE NEW HUMANITY

The third statement, that of the restoration of the Divine Image in man by Jesus Christ, cannot be developed within the framework of anthropology, but is only present within it as the point from which all the rest is regarded. The doctrine of the new birth and of redemption, being the

topic of soteriology, is the boundary of anthropology and therefore as such can only be suggested here. We will confine our observations to developing, by a retrospective glance at what has been said already, the truth of man as renewed in Jesus Christ and the renewal of humanity.

1. The renewal of man in Jesus Christ means first of all the forgiveness of sins. This implies that in the Biblical doctrine of man the concern is always with man as a responsible being. Responsibility, from the negative point of view, means guilt. The fact that the Bible—in contrast to all other forms of religion and philosophy—places forgiveness of guilt in the most central place, shows to how great an extent it holds that everything centres in the problem of responsibility. It also shows that human existence is always related to the Divine "Thou." The existence of man is not an independent existence, but it is what it is through its relation to God. Man's attitude to God is the heart of his being. The renewal, the reintegration of man, who has fallen into contradiction and therefore into ruin, begins with the fact that man is "accepted in grace," thus that he is once more restored to his original attitude towards God. With this renewal of his position the most essential element in personal renewal has taken place.

2. This renewal in the centre takes place through the "justification of the sinner," through the Word of God. This means that in actual fact the personal existence of man is determined by the Word of God, so that, by the reception of the Word, man is a new person. It is not the infusion of grace but the verdict of justification, the Word of God graciously imparting love, which creates the new man. Through this Word of forgiving love, the Image of God is again restored, which is indeed nothing other than existence in the Word of God, existence in the Love of God. According to the view of the Bible, personality is

not constituted by any formal spiritual endowment; the *Imago Dei* is not to be understood in this formal sense, but in this material sense, which is both a relation and an actuality: the self-understanding of man in the self-giving Word of God. It is to be understood literally: "Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God." To fall away from this Word by unbelief and disobedience does not only affect the content of personality but personality itself; by this act personal life is divided. Non-existence in the love of God is the loss of truly personal existence, it is impersonal personality. By justification through faith the right relation to God is restored and also the unity of personality (peace), and likewise truly personal life, that is, love.

3. In the New Testament, however, justification is never represented merely as a judicial acquittal but it is always also a creative act of God. Since man comes into a new position he gains a new reality. Justification is directly both re-birth and sanctification. For the new position is not only an act of God, it is also at the same time knowledge and obedience, the believing obedience of man. Hence the Bible speaks of "justifying faith" as well as of the "justifying Word." The existence of man—this was our main thesis—is responsive actuality, the actual answer of man to the actual Word of God. The man who really receives the Divine Love by this very act himself becomes loving. "Faith which worketh through love" alone counts before God. This it is which constitutes the image of God in man: that his life as life in love reflects the Love of God. "Let us love Him because He has first loved us." The Divine love which man gives out again to others is the reflection of the primal Love of God for man.

4. The renewal of man through Jesus Christ also means the renewal of humanity. As a purely individual

process it cannot be imagined, for it means being incorporated into the Body of Christ, the Church. This shows clearly that we were right in conceiving the existence of man as person as existence in community. How could it be otherwise since it is indeed existence in love? Love is community. All that makes man truly personal makes him at the same time a truly social member of humanity united in Christ. The "person" and "community" are correlates; the one cannot be realized or even thought of apart from the other. Once again it becomes manifest how important it is to define the concept of the person materially as existence in love. Only thus can we understand that the personal and the communal is one and the same. In the Christian Church, as in the New Testament, it is especially the Sacrament of Holy Communion which expresses this unity: that which truly feeds me is the same as that which creates community.

5. Both, however, the renewal and the realization of the true "person" and of true "community" can only be fully understood from the point of view of the goal of renewal. Man is not merely what he is now but that which he is destined to be. In sinful man destiny and existence have broken asunder in the antithesis of that which is and that which ought to be. In justification and reconciliation this antithesis has been overcome in principle though not yet fully in reality. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." The fact that man possesses his self not in himself but in Christ is known to faith but it has not yet been finally realized The perfect realization of this God-intended self, however, is simply the realization of God-intended humanity. It takes place through the coming of Christ in power. In Jesus Christ the true self comes to the individual and to humanity, and is its meaning. Just as we await the Christ who is to come, so also we await the realization of our true existence, both as per-

sons and in community. Can there be a stronger expression of the fact that the true self of man is not in himself but in Jesus Christ, and therefore that it is in God? Hence Christian anthropology is essentially Christology; for Christ is our righteousness, our sanctification, and our life.

# THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF MAN

*by*

AUSTIN FARRER

# THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF MAN

EARLIER essays in this book have defined Christian belief against several heretical positions. It might be expected that, the ground being thus cleared, we could now proceed to a purely positive statement of the precious truth. But is this in fact possible to us? To define against heresy, as these writers have done, is a well-known task of the theologian; all our positive credal statements, serene and timeless as they now appear, are but the crystallized deposit of such defensive definitions in the past. When some heresy is in the field, we have to draw a line, and say: "the Christian Verity is to be found on this side, not that, of such-and-such a boundary." This much theology *must* do: it is her life-and-death concern: and, whether we like it or not, we are bound in so far to dogmatize, because it concerns man's salvation that we should.

But when, within such necessary boundaries, the theologian is called upon to state the Christian truth in positive terms, what is he to do? Our Lord, faced with a similar question out of the blue, replied: "Thou knowest the Commandments." We, following that example, may be tempted simply to refer inquirers to the divine gospel and the living Church. But, it will be said, surely we are not irrationalists: it is the business of the theologian to systematize as best he can the revealed truth, in the light of natural knowledge. Very well: but such speculative systems are tentative and private: who can venture to put his own forward as *the* Christian doctrine of man?

We become even more alarmed about the task laid upon us, when we realize that the Christian doctrine of man is being laid down as the foundation on which practical conclusions are to be built, referring to the social and political spheres. This doctrine, then, is to be some

sort of bridge between the faith of the Gospel and its practical application. Now it might very well be suspected that no such a bridge exists or can exist. Perhaps, after all, there is only the Word of God on the one hand, and on the other the Church's consciousness which, responding thereto, arrives at convictions about certain particular things which ought to be done. The preacher proclaims Christ: in responsibility towards the Christ proclaimed, and in view of the situation before him, the Christian man of practical vision sees what he thinks should be done: the Christian scholar adds the guidance of precedent from the Church's former acts: the critical theologian judges the proposed decisions by the standards of faith. The series is complete: nowhere does there intervene a constructive theologian with a theory of man, from which the practical decision needs to be deduced.

"Well but," it may be protested, "the practical and moral judgments of Christians are not chaotic, not unconnected by any thread of common principle. From the Church's moral experience generalizations can be drawn; and these might well be called a Christian doctrine of man." They might indeed: but then they are reflective, and subsequent to the action which is the primary response to the Gospel; and, being generalizations from the past, they share the unsatisfactoriness of all such generalizations—the practical light they shed on new situations is dim and equivocal, and those who expect from such a doctrine clear deductions about the desirable direction for new forms of state activity, will probably be disappointed. The only theologian who can help much there is the theologian who feels inspired to prophesy. Let those that have it exercise the gift.

It looks as though the Christian doctrine of man will fall apart into two halves—a generalization from the Christian practical conscience: and the Gospel itself

viewed from its human end. The essay which follows will deal with the relations between these two doctrines of man —the doctrine revealed from Heaven and the doctrine which springs from the enlightened conscience. Then, by an inevitable transition, we shall find ourselves led to deal with the relation between the conscience enlightened by Revelation and the conscience not thus enlightened: between the practical ideal for man within Christianity and that which is to be found outside it.

## I. WHAT IS MEANT BY A CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF MAN?

The reflections we have so far made seem to be confirmed when we examine the attempts of philosophers or theologians to arrive at an account of man's substance. Their real object, we quickly discover, is to answer the question: "What ought man to be and do?" But it seems natural to attempt first the apparently prior question: "What is man?" For if man be a spiritual organism so constituted as to perform a certain function, observe the structure of the organism and you will be able to infer the function's nature: proceed, therefore, with your analytic exposition of man's constitution.

But when we examine the analyses that have been made, we find that they consist in the enumeration of "active properties." Elasticity is an active property in a ball; and if the ball has this property, it is capable of an elastic rebound. But in attributing to it this property, we are merely attributing to it a quality X, such that it will rebound in suitable circumstances. And our only evidence for its doing so, and therefore for its possession of the quality, is the observed fact of its rebounding.

Similarly, we may be told that man has spirit in his make-up. Either this means nothing relevant to our

purpose, or it means he is capable of what are called spiritual activities, of which the types could be roughly enumerated. But we can only know this by having observed such activities in exercise; and all we shall then know is that various men in various observed degrees have shown themselves capable of these activities. We cannot proceed to the universal "man has spirituality," nor even if we could to the conclusion "and therefore he ought to behave thus and thus."

It appears vain, therefore, to construct a wholly invisible substance which all men are, in order to explain why a certain pattern of activities is what they ought to practise. Our primary certainties, if we have any, are about this pattern itself: we may claim that a certain configuration of it is good, or the good, for man, and this may be the only doctrine of man worth having.

If we do make such statements, we must be assuming that the relation between man's life or realized perfection on the one hand, and on the other his determinate substantial being *qua* man, is certainly not fixed. He must be capable of various patterns of life, or it would be needless to inquire which is best. His pattern must be alterable; but no doubt there are limits to that alterability. Perhaps it is here that an examination of what man *is*, of his actual "nature," may come in: we may try by observation to arrive at the probable limits of his variations. And so we do, if we are psychologists or physiologists: we gain an ever-increasing body of evidence as to what tunes can and cannot be played on the human instrument without material damage to it.

Even this evidence is no surer or wider than the instances from which it has been generalized: it does not rule out the possibility of a fundamental change in man or in some men, falling completely outside its generalizations. But let us ignore this point, and accept the sciences as they

stand. Still they only tell us what will not work. Among the various lives that will work—for there are many—we have still to make our choice, and Christian theology claims to be able to assist us.

Theology can but point to the data of Revelation; but these, whatever it is that they give us, do not supply a system of ethics and sociology, nor yet do they give us a doctrine of man's substantial composition, from which these things could be deduced.

It is true, no doubt, that Scripture gives some account of man's substance in terms of body, soul, spirit, and other such conceptions. This language is primitive, inadequate, and confused. The Scripture was not given to teach us psychology. One need not deny that such terminology was accurate enough for the purposes of Scripture, that is, for referring to the human pole of the relation with God which God brings about. But that only shows how completely Scripture is concerned with the relation, and how little with the human pole considered apart from the relation. If the terminology has any merit, it is the merit of infancy as compared with maturity. Maturity in becoming determinate and effective excludes many possibilities that still seemed to lie open to childhood. So human thought in becoming mature becomes accurate indeed and systematic, but narrowed by its very definiteness; and a glance back to the childhood of the human mind may convey to us vague and undifferentiated suggestions of a wider truth than can be expressed in our current philosophy or science. That might mean for us the reform of our present conceptions, certainly not a return to their primitive counterparts.

Revelation, then, does not set out to answer for us the question "What is man?" but to tell us how God made him but little lower than the angels, how He regards and visits him, and crowns him with glory and honour. Here

we have primarily acts of God, but no doubt secondarily activities also of man in response thereto. Since these activities of man are the appropriate responses to the objects set to him by God's acts, they make up what is the true pattern of man's life according to the Christian Revelation, and to know this pattern would be to know, if not a Christian doctrine *of* man, at least the Christian doctrine *for* man. We may indeed study the pattern direct, in the lives of those who have worthily pursued the God-given objects, but even so, the objects were determinant for them and the primary matter of Revelation. For piety, in a Christian view, is just whatever a man does in conforming himself to the self-revealed God, and to infer the revelation from the response is in the strictest sense preposterous.

This is not of course to say that we begin with the revealed knowledge of what God is, simply in Himself. Of such knowledge we are not capable recipients. What is revealed is His actions, and Himself only as the agent of them; and what He does is to create, call, redeem, promise, that is, to determine our existence and not His own. And yet these determinations do not reveal to us what we are, but give us the objects we must pursue.

It would not do to say that the relations of man with God which Revelation displays are simply external to man, as they are external to God. The relations which come into existence between the creature and the Creator do not affect the Creator's being: the creature's they not only affect but effect, since both our nature and our existence are pure effects of His will. That is true of the order of being; but in the order of knowing it is otherwise. As knowers, we begin by taking ourselves for granted. Then we learn, in this case from Revelation, the relations in which we stand to our environment—in this case, our supernatural environment which is God Himself: and next, the claims that this environment has upon our

activity. And so Revelation is primarily of God's acts and the relations to Him which they create for us; and it is through the knowledge of these things that we come to the knowledge of the sort of life we ought to live in response to them, and so to the Christian doctrine of man.

## 2. HOW THE RELATIONS OF MAN TO GOD MAKE POSSIBLE THE IDEA OF A DOCTRINE OF MAN

We can only attempt to show here how the very notion of a true nature of man, which he ought to and in some cases is destined to realize, is, for the Christian, bound up with those relations to God in which Revelation sets him. Of these relations we may specify:

1. Man's relation to God as his Creator and Sustainer.
2. His relation to the end intended by the Creator.
3. The correspondence or non-correspondence of his present course with the steps divinely intended to lead him to that end.
4. His relation to the gracious intervention of God which is to restore that correspondence when lost.

To the Christian it appears that the very conception of a true or natural pattern for human existence depends on the first two of these relations. If we take man apart from God, why suppose one end or goal for mankind at all? Men are many, and they are various. It is true that they have, in general outline, the same biological basis, being of one animal species. But there seems no reason why they should not go as many ways as their common species allows them to go, or as their herd instincts allow them to desire. But if what appears to phenomenal observation as the evolution of man is in its reality the creative act of God, then a Maker may have a purpose, and a Maker of many a common purpose for all, and this "idea" subsisting in the Divine Intention is the true

exemplar of the true doctrine of man—that is, indeed, where the true nature of man truly *is*, and only secondarily in anything that man may be observed to be, or to be tending towards, or aspiring after in fact.

It is this intention of man's Creator that imposes on him an absolute obligation—that of acting in correspondence with it; and failure to correspond makes his state one of sin. How great the lack of correspondence, and how complete the inability of man to recover it, is known by Revelation alone; and that revelation takes the form of the divine intervention itself which recovers it to him. For it was in the act of God's recovering man that man saw how low he had fallen. The revelation of a depth implies the revelation of a height, and both were revealed by the act which lifted man from the one to the other.

If it is true that the first two relations specified above give us the bare possibility of conceiving a true and unitary "nature" for men, it is the second two which afford the possibility of filling that conception with any content. Words about our final consummation or true end would bear no sense, unless they bore analogy to present experience. And so the actual reception of grace, as being a foretaste of our end, is our key to the conception of it. If our end is to attain unto God, then the entry of God into the world in Christ, and our being by the Spirit enabled to know Him there, is the actual revelation of our end: and it is from our end that we know our true "nature." By our redemption we are already in some measure in reception of God; and, therefore, able to attach some sense to the teaching that promises us an increase both of our capacity to receive and of its satisfaction up to such a point, that any further increase would destroy our determinate nature as creatures of a certain kind.

The notion of such a fixed point might suggest an arbitrary limit, as though we might be destined to fret

for all eternity against a barrier we may not pass. There is no need to think anything of the kind. If we are to receive God up to the limit of our capacity, and that capacity finds its measure in our very nature as men, then we should presumably feel no barrier, for who can feel a barrier in the absolute fulfilment of himself? To desire more would be to desire extinction, by absorption into the very being of God Himself. Absorption is a misleading word; it suggests that something remains of what is absorbed. But God realizes in Himself the full possibilities of the divine nature: there is no room for more gods but One, or in the One for any addition; and the deification of the creature is exactly its annihilation. By this path also, then, we are led back to the same point—that the Christian doctrine of man's end and consummation itself implies that the Creator has assigned to man a determinate nature, which can be perfectly fulfilled, but not passed beyond.

That does not mean that the present pattern of our nature is eternally unalterable; for who can determine exactly which aspects of manhood as we know it belong to the conditions of its ultimate perfectibility and which to the state of earthly existence? Grace, then, may perform upon us marvels that we cannot conceive; but still in perfecting, not superseding, our nature; a nature which is a datum for grace and imposes a measure on what grace may effect: just what measure we cannot know.

Our ignorance is not removed by the revelation of God in Christ. There indeed we see divine perfection measured or limited by the capacity of human nature, yet not of the nature we shall ultimately be, but only of the possibilities of its perfection under the conditions of this life. To know the other we should have to have direct knowledge of Christ in glory, which we have not, so far as regards His

manner of being. We have some knowledge of Him in the days of His flesh; and there we see Him clothed in certain elements of our nature as we know it here; which we assume, therefore, to belong at least to the raw material of our perfection, and not to the dross of perversions which grace will simply purge away.

If in the Man Christ Jesus we have a man in perfect response to the acts of God through which we are related to Him, then in the same Christ we have in actual and perfect expression the human pole of the relation between God and man, as redemption restores it under the conditions of our present life; and to know this would be to know the Christian doctrine of man in the only way possible to us here.

### 3. THE STATUS OF NON-CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES ABOUT MAN

We have so far attempted to show that while it is not possible to begin with the knowledge of a human substance simply given, it is possible to conceive a true nature of man—true with the truth of correspondence to a divine exemplar, as artistic expression can be true in corresponding to the artist's thought. We have hoped to show the possibility of such a conception within the framework of Christian Revelation. We proceed to consider whether there can be any conception of it outside that framework; and if so, what it is that revelation adds to a knowledge obtainable without it.

To maintain that apart from the one Revelation there is no conception of man's nature or pattern of life, is nothing more nor less than an attempt to silence good evidence by hard swearing; though some appear not to have shrunk from it. It is evident that all philosophies, religions, or views of the world, excluding those that are

purely sceptical and including most that pretend to be so, have something to say about the true type of human life. It is equally plain that the subject matter about which they try to speak is the same as that about which the Christian doctrine does speak: equally plain that while all are, by the Christian standard, more or less wrong, all are more or less right as well.

That is the evidence, and our difficulties do not begin till we launch into dogmatic explanations of it—which admittedly we are bound to try to find. Could we say, for example, that before Revelation a certain area of the rational conscience was indefectible and uncorrupt, a certain set of moral propositions clear, while those other truths remained in the dark which Revelation was later given to illuminate? Such a suggestion remains plausible only so long as we abstain from trying to enumerate these truths of reason.

If, then, we cannot maintain in this sense a residual but reliable reason left over by the "fall," are we to go into the other camp and assert "total depravity"? That depends on what we mean by "total depravity." If we are adopting an eschatological view, and taking our stand at the final consummation of the world, then no doubt it is proper to say that everything in the world is totally depraved, if it is turned so crooked as not to be following a line which will bring it to its God-intended consummation. If a creature is so behaving as to lead to its becoming a final and total loss, then there is a good sense in saying that it is totally off the right line.

If, on the other hand, we consider any creature as it is at any moment of its progress towards its end, however lamentable that end is to be, and ask what it now is in itself; then to say that it has no correspondence of any kind with the nature intended by its Creator does not make sense. So long as a creature continues to exist, its

existence cannot fall wholly outside the nature intended by its Creator: that is the charter of its being, and by passing outside its terms, it would either cease to exist or become something else. Human nature totally depraved in this sense would be totally denatured and dehumanized. We might accept that description of the totally insane so far as their life is manifested to us; but hardly of mankind as a whole before Revelation.

Corruption is a real and terrible thing; but it is distributed partially over man's whole moral nature, and is not the total extinction of any particular elements in it. There is only one thing that is definitely and simply "lost" —a sure true and objective vision of God. That vision, and the relation to God founded upon it, may well be the very head in the body or organism of man's spiritual nature, the very keystone to the arch. But this head being lost, the members do not simply mortify and perish: if they did, there would be nothing left for redemption to redeem. They have a certain vitality which causes them to struggle against their own corruption: not, we may well say, with such success that they ever unaided shake it off, or attain a mastery which is the earnest of final victory and final perseverance; yet vigorously enough to maintain their own existence, to be still holding out when grace comes to give the triumph they cannot themselves attain.

But in nature's unaided struggle, it is absurd to draw lines she cannot, in this and that instance, overpass. There is no specific human virtue or social attitude of which we could dare to say that it is not to be found in those untouched by the Christian dispensation. In perfection, no doubt not: but we might look in vain for that among the elect who have not perfection but only the earnest of it. And even their having that is a matter of faith.

Man, then, apart from Revelation and Grace, is still man, and the creature of God; and though corrupt in

his spiritual nature to an undefinable extent, still has, as is evident, the power of reflecting on his true nature and obtaining some impression of the pattern of it intended by God. He may not even be aware that God is, but that does not prevent his having some sense of a goal set before him, because man as a spiritual being is essentially an aspirant, and an aspirant must have an object of his aspiration; so that in being aware of himself in any wise, man is aware, however confusedly, of a pattern of true nature; and, once again, we can draw no line that his unaided moral reflection is incapable of passing. There is no single moral conviction that nature may not arrive at for herself, so long as we are speaking of man's ideal for his own life on earth, or for his relations with his neighbour.

In saying this, we are not going back on our original denial that man has a substantial being which can be objectively defined in such a way that his true end could be inferred from it. What the pagan philosopher does is not this at all, even if it is what he thinks he is doing. He is, in fact, becoming vaguely aware—*sub quadam confusione*, says St. Thomas—of the exemplar which is actually in the divine mind, and nowhere else. The persistence of man's moral nature even under corruption means the persistence of actual aspiration towards the divinely appointed end, and that implies a certain vision of that end, however confused, and however dissociated from all ideas of theology. It is sufficient here to state the fact, without asking through what channels this confused conception of the divine purpose reaches the "natural reason."

We will pause to refute a heresy, partly because it is pernicious, partly because the refutation of it will cast further light on the relation between Revelation and "natural reason." This heresy attempts to prove, in the teeth of all evidence, that certain vital spiritual attitudes

and convictions about the human side of human life are impossible without faith in Revelation, or at least in God.

The heretical argument builds on the propositions asserted above, that a right conscious relation to God is the keystone to the structure of human life, or head to its organism. For in an existence ordered towards God, the various elements belonging to the true pattern of our life are seen to find their reasonable and organic place, and to co-operate harmoniously in subserving the one supreme end. Remove the governing principle and the harmony and completeness to which Christian eyes are accustomed will no longer be found. But the now headless members of our moral nature—the various elements of interest, desire, and aspiration, social or self-regarding—are unwilling to fall into complete dissociation and dissolution. Having lost their king, they elect a president, and tend to reunite themselves under some makeshift principle or another, when they find themselves deprived of their proper head; and so arise various philosophies, whether formulated or unconscious.

The Christian dialectician takes these various substitute highest principles of action. One may be self-realization, another the good of the totality of mankind; another the attainment of a certain list of "values." About all these he proceeds to demonstrate that they are inadequate for the rôle they have undertaken. Treat any one of them as your supreme motive, and it becomes impossible to regard some one or other of the Christian virtues—it may be absolute chastity, it may be true neighbourly love—as means that you would naturally adopt in order to compass that end. Either the end fails to provide a place for the Christian virtue at all, or else, in adopting it, more or less seriously distorts it.

The Christian dialectician may further claim to show

that even though you may have true neighbourly love as derived not from your false first principle of action, but from some independent source—e.g. from the example of Christians—then still the false first principle, if it has any serious influence on your thoughts and acts, is bound to cramp its exercise. If you really treat the friendship you show to your neighbour as means to your own self-realization or as a contribution to the well-being of an abstract totality called mankind or the state, the quality of your neighbourliness will not remain unimpaired.

All this may very well be true; but it is at the next step in the argument that error arises: when the theologian goes on to draw the conclusion that so long as you have the false first principle, you cannot exhibit true neighbourly love at all, nor possess the notion of it, nor admit the claim of it. This conclusion is false. The only true conclusion would be: "You cannot *logically*, so long as you pretend that all your morality is to be deduced from your false first principle." But even if men do seriously pretend this, how many of them are logical in its practical application? It is very unplausible to maintain that men are so single-minded and logical in their aims: all are in practice pluralists to a greater or less extent, and follow many uncoordinated values; and, therefore, though the possession of a false first principle and the loss of the true may make impossible the realization of the full true pattern of human nature in the ordered Kingdom of Ends, it remains possible for any single human virtue or worthy aim to flourish illogically under the makeshift republic.

If men who have lost a true conscious relation with God could not patch together the consequent disunion of their aims and of their life with some sort of substitute general principle, their minds would fall into extreme disorder. But equally, if they could not set up such a patched unity without the substitute first principle's

imposing an absolute dictatorship and *Gleichschaltung* upon all the elements it patches together, men would become completely dehumanized. We see the process going a good way in certain fanatics: but if it goes all the way, the man is mad. In the ordinary case, it is the essence of the situation that the patch remains a patch, and so in more or less disharmony with what it patches. Only the true first principle can be anything else. And this no doubt is the reason for the world's profound suspicion of philosophy whenever it proposes to take itself too seriously: and a similar suspicion of Christianity, with those who do not know what it is. If one gave God an inch, He might so easily take an ell!

But, it is said, apart from the love of God we have at least one purely human disability: we cannot love humanity. No: but then the love of humanity is not a human possibility at all, because humanity is nothing but an idea in the mind of God, and we can only love the idea by loving the mind, and desiring the fulfilment of that mind's purposes. Otherwise, humanity is merely a general description of such men as we may be in direct and indirect relations with, and to love humanity can only mean to entertain the resolve to take up a friendly attitude to any men we may have to do with from time to time.

The paragraphs which have preceded might be welcome to a humanist as a plea on behalf of natural goodness: a suggestion that man is not so very bad after all, and in need of supernatural grace only to add the last touches to his perfection. Any such interpretation must be far from the mind of the Christian theologian. Our object has been merely to show that what corruption fastens on is human goodness. A parasite cannot be parasitic on nothing, nor can corruption prey upon itself. But the terrible nature of the disease is only heightened by the worth of what it undermines and will at length destroy. A

stinking fungus in the woods may be offensive to sense; but to the mind it is infinitely less distressing than a cancer in the human throat.

From the point of view also of our responsibility for evil—a topic on which we shall later have more to say—the same thing appears. The shining excellences that are in mankind themselves create the blackness of a sin which can turn from a realized spiritual beauty to feed on garbage. Every such act is guilt which cannot be weighed, much less atoned, by man. Had his present condition simply dropped to that of some baser creature, then whatever the guilt of his ancestors, his own would be small. The type of sin is not the serpent considered according to its natural kind, but the rebellious angel who chose to crawl the dust.

It is in this spirit that we have maintained the roots of all the human virtues to be in natural man. And it is none the less only by supernatural aid that they can at last be saved alive, not to say brought to perfection.

## 4. WHENCE THE CONTENT OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF MAN IS DERIVED

There might at first sight appear to be a contradiction between the last two sections of this essay. In the former (2) the very idea of a doctrine of man was said to spring from that of the relations in which man stands to God. In the latter (3) men, quite unaware of any relation to God, were admitted to have some sound notions about the true nature of man. Now we did attempt to cover this contradiction by the statment that the unbeliever is actually apprehending the effect of a divine relation without realizing it. But this naturally suggests the rejoinder: "But cannot the Christian do the same? When the Christian sees some aspect of the good for man, does

he necessarily see it as the consequence of a relation to God?"

We must answer that it is obvious that the Christian's conscience can function without the awareness of theological principles just as anyone else's can. It is only on philosophical reflection that the very notion of a "true good for man" hangs upon theology. The particular content of that notion may be given not by awareness that man is made in God's image, but by the functioning of that image in man.

The Christian's human virtues are not all dictated from Heaven, nor are they inferred by mere hard reasoning as logical consequences from the relations in which he learns himself to stand towards God. They are not a mere conformity to principles imposed by his theology, but spring naturally in his human consciousness as faith towards God completes the pattern of his nature. They are natural and not supernatural to him: but in order to attain their proper perfection they need their true setting, and that setting is itself partly supernatural, being in this aspect nothing else but those relations to God of which we have spoken. This setting being given, nature has her true efflorescence, like a plant that has obtained soil, sunlight, and air.

This does not mean that it is impossible to enforce the detail of ethics by theological considerations. For all these parts of the pattern once it is finished, both the supernatural setting and the microcosm of nature, are interrelated in a true order, in which the various elements are felt to imply one another; so that men can be told to love as brethren because they have one Father, or to purify themselves even as He is pure. But it remains true all the same that human duties are duties because they are human; because God created man that he might realize his manhood; and what that is, is known to the Christian

by redeemed nature's own response to God: doubtless not the nature of the isolated individual alone, but human nature all the same.

This matter is somewhat complicated by the fact that Christians have in the life and ethical maxims of Christ a standard of the truly human; and it is a usual way of speaking to call this standard a matter of revelation; which in a sense, no doubt, it is. But if we carry consideration a step further back, we shall say that the humanity of Christ, in human activities and relations, is itself human nature perfectly actualized in its true setting, that of absolute rightness of relation towards God. And so what happens in Him is what happens, however imperfectly, in believers.

We have attempted to reconcile these two propositions: "The Christian doctrine of man is just the human conscience come fully to itself," and "The Christian doctrine of man essentially presupposes the Christian revelation of God in Christ." And this coming to itself of the human conscience we take to include the stabilizing of it. But now how far is this stabilization a fact? No doubt there is more agreement between Christians who claim to obey the authority of the once-given Revelation, than there is in the rest of mankind beside. But there is disagreement also: and that is not hard to explain.

In the Christ of the Gospels we believe that the true self-awareness of humanity is found pure. There is the true man truly responding to the true God with true humanity. But Christ's acts and words do not give us a complete guide to life, and what they do give us may be misinterpreted in being applied to new circumstances: nor can any mere logical accuracy eliminate such misinterpretation. An element of fresh spiritual judgment is involved and our judgment may be impure.

Both for interpretation, therefore, and for supplementa-

tion we are forced to call in the Christian consciousness outside Our Lord, a consciousness liable to an indeterminable degree of perversion and error, and yet the best that we have. We shall look for it where we suppose it to be purest or most surely guided. To raise the question as to where that is would be to compare the claims of Churches to their authority, and of saints to their aureoles. This is not the place to do it, nor is it the place to discuss how much weight is to be attached to precedent, even the best, or how far the individual has to make new decisions for himself in responsibility towards God. It will be sufficient to state that everyone respects some authority in practice; or if not, then he must deny any expressible Christian doctrine of man at all.

### 5. THE CONTENT OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF MAN

From what precedes it must follow that the content of the Christian doctrine of man is the whole deliverance of the true Christian conscience, in unity with Our Lord's, concerning the good for man in this life. To attempt an expression of this would be to attempt a complete system of ethics. We can here go no further than the most bare generalizations and arid platitudes, mentioning only these principles—the hierarchy and balance of activities, sociality, liberty, and spirituality.

Quite apart from all questions of duty to his neighbour, the Christian sets certain activities before others: other things being equal, feeding should yield to philosophy and pushpin to poetry. But this principle of hierarchy does not exclude the principle of balance. There is a time for philosophizing, but a time also to refrain from philosophy, and some kind of balance is to be observed, though only in broad principle. It is absurd to think one can write a prescription for the employment of everyman's

leisure, or demand that every example of *homo sapiens* should be an example of *homo rotundus*, that mythical species, the all-round man. Yet however absurd we become in attempting too much exactness in their application, the principles of hierarchy and balance of activities are perfectly binding as far as they go, and form a man's absolute duty, so far as that duty can be considered apart from duty to his neighbour.

The preservation of such balance and order requires discipline, not merely the resolute choice of the right activity when the inappropriate one is bewitching, but the systematic hardening of oneself in habits conducive to right choices. For we are creatures of habit, and cannot trust habits to look entirely after themselves.

In his respect for these things, the Christian need be in no way singular. Although it is unlikely that his hierarchy and system of activities will correspond exactly with that of the non-Christian in detail, the non-Christian may recognize these principles in general, and have many details too in common with him, and be as absolute in his sense of duty.

But now there are certain activities which will be peculiar to the Christian. For his conscious response to God, in acts of understanding and love, is not indeed itself human activity, nor subject-matter of ethics, but demands and uses human activities none the less. These religious practices will have their place in the scheme of life, and will carry with them further and peculiar developments of self-discipline. For now this is valued not merely for the formation of useful habit, but for creating the state of life conducive to the contemplation of God.

But once again, religious practice and the religious discipline that goes with it are not peculiar to the Christian alone: other followers of other religions know them. Yet

here we have something in which the Christian is more directly determined in his conduct by revealed truth—religious practice does not spring simply in the human conscience, but is a direct opening of oneself to God according as one believes in Him. As the beliefs differ, so will the practices and the estimation in which they are held, and it is the less to be expected that the Christian will coincide with others in this field. The source and value of non-Christian religious ideas is a question which we must refuse to consider here.

It is odd that the duties of sociality should have been sometimes treated as the chief matter of the Christian Revelation. Sociality is part of the true nature of man as man, and so recognized by the most considerable non-Christian thinkers. It is part of what we are from the start, it is a datum for grace when it comes, and lays down lines along which grace will have to proceed if its action is not to dehumanize us. The plurality of men belongs as much to our existence as the unity of God does to His, and the end of man must be a social one. That this involves the absolute and universal obligation of justice and loving-kindness is a possible piece of moral knowledge apart from revelation, however much it may be stabilized and enforced by the theological consideration that other men are as much objects for God as we ourselves, so that to love Him means to adopt His purpose for them.

Justice means impartiality in all men's minds, and loving-kindness means wishing them well and giving them friendly assistance in the defence and attainment of their good. There is much more agreement about these definitions than there is about the goods that we have to be impartial in allotting if we are to be just, and that we have to wish and strive to obtain for others if we are to be loving. Thus while two of us may coincide exactly in our definitions of these great social virtues, our views of their

practical application may be poles asunder, in so far as we differ in our estimation of the goods to be distributed by justice or sought by loving-kindness. So the practical meaning of our social morality will depend on our individual morality—on our opinion about the hierarchy and balance of activities, but also on our belief in supernatural goods, which though they do not form the subject-matter of this essay, cannot be excluded here. The Christian in wishing well to his brother and acting on his wish, will desire for him a right relation with God in response to divine grace, expressed in contemplation as well as obedience, and supported by a self-discipline conducive thereto.

It is in its content, then, rather than in its form that Christian altruism is peculiar: the Christian is not singular in exercising sympathy, but in sympathizing with his neighbour's position as a soul living in the sight of God. If loving-kindness is to be defined as sympathetic co-operation with others in the attainment of whatever aims they happen to adopt, then the Christian must be confessed to be not more, but less, loving than other men. True, he has sympathy for error, or rather for the man that has fallen into it, but to support him in the recovery of the right path, and not in the attainment of his erroneously chosen goal.

This aspect of the Christian's social conscience gives a peculiar turn to his version of the principle of liberty, the third of those we proposed to consider. That principle is not a Christian monopoly. It may be stated in the form, that men's attainment of their good must come through the exercise of their own choice and will. But now the Christian, together with some other moralists, will have a particular temptation to interfere with the liberty of others, because he thinks it important that they should pursue the right goods and not the wrong. This may lead

him to adopt the line of conduct which has been euphemistically but nonsensically described as "forcing them to be free," i.e. *driving* them into the right channels of endeavour.

But then on the other hand he has an equally strong interest in leaving them to act for themselves, since the chief of those "right goods" that he wishes for them is a right standing in the presence of God, and that can only consist of a right attitude of the autonomous will. Our wills are ours to make them God's, and it cannot be done by proxy.

The Christian's respect for liberty, then, will be something of his own. He will appear to others to be inclined to unwarranted interference; but he will claim that his so-called interference is intended to create the very condition of the true exercise of liberty. For liberty is the voluntary choice of the good. But the good cannot be chosen unless it has been seen. The interference of the Christian, then, will consist in that effective presentation of the good which makes possible for another the choice of it.

Needless to say that, other things being equal, the Christian sympathizes and co-operates with his neighbour in the attainment of immediate and natural desires, and that the obligation to do so is absolute.

Under the last head, spirituality, comes the problem suggested by an earlier section of this essay, when we touched on the subject of the bounds set by our earthly condition to the progress of our nature, under the impulse of grace, towards its ultimate perfection. What, in fact, are these bounds? Ought we to push them back as far as possible, and follow the Aristotelian maxim, which bids us live the life of immortals even here, as far as in us lies? Since certain things, for example, in Christ's words, marrying and giving in marriage, and every pleasure of

sense, seem to belong to our present condition rather than to our ultimate perfectibility, can we anticipate paradise by mortifying them?

This question is partly a practical one—how far can it be done, without cutting our life off from the roots of its natural energy, and so frustrating our object by starving the higher activities themselves? To mortify the "body of flesh" is not to enter into immediate possession of the Resurrection-body: we cannot hope to live in the flesh and out of the flesh at the same time. But partly too it is a social question—how far can it in fact be done without irresponsibility towards the rest of mankind, from whom we are not free to dissociate ourselves?

The answer then depends on practical considerations, and has been solved for the few by the admission of a social and regulated monasticism as a specialized function of society in general, which those who are called into this life help more in this way than they would in any other. For the many, infinite varieties and degrees in other-worldliness have to be recommended according to the vocation and opportunity of each.

Our conclusion is, that the Christian doctrine of the good for man is no more than a pure and stabilized form of the human conscience about it. This is so, in so far as human goods and relationships are concerned. But those supernatural goods which Christianity adds are no mere addition, nor merely the cause of the purity and stability of the Christian's view of the rest. For the life of man's spirit is not an agglomerate but an organism, and of that organism we have called his conscious relation with God the head. The whole is more than the sum of its parts, and the natural goods become transmuted in entering into the supernatural good by becoming the field of man's service to God. For the Christian there can be no mere morality. His moral judgments may agree with other

men's but his obedience to them is obedience to God, and a means of appropriating the supreme good.

### 6. THE FREEDOM OF MAN AND THE IMAGE OF GOD

We have said something about man's nature in its relation to God: and something about its content in itself. We must turn to man's nature in its relation to man. For the paradox of human existence is that man becomes an object to himself: he is concerned with realizing what he is: this is the mystery of the Will.

Man's nature has appeared in the double rôle of goal and limit to his aspiration. It is a certain measure of the divine perfection, and, therefore, the object of his striving: but again it is only a certain measure of it, and, therefore, a limit to his pursuit of perfection itself. But neither a goal nor a limit to aspiration would have any meaning unless man were an aspirant and, therefore, a free creature: if he had not a power to aspire after his end and to conform his actions to his aspirations.

That man's will is free—that it is a will, in fact, and not something else—is certainly Christian doctrine, however many views have been taken by Christians about the scope of his freedom: and it seems best here not to attempt to take sides with any school, but rather to express the minimum doctrine of human liberty which must be held if our religion is to make sense.

We need not assert, then, an arbitrary freedom of choice—that man is able to will anything that could ever come into his head. But we must assert the freedom of effort. Let it be granted that a man can recognize an aspiration as the highest he has—either the highest absolutely, or the highest that applies to these or those given circumstances with which he is to-day confronted. He *can* recognize it, but only if he makes the effort of sincere

reflection. He may or may not make that effort: here lies his freedom. But again, when he has recognized it, he may or may not make the effort required to bring his action into line with his aspiration: and here is freedom again.

It does not seem necessary to assert that a man could always have reflected honestly or acted virtuously on each given occasion. Past failures may have incapacitated him; there may be impediments in the physical or psychic constitution he has inherited. It is enough to assert that he has *some* freedom, however narrow its scope; for then there is something to which the moralist can address himself, and some field in which the will can be exercised.

Christians are not singular in the assertion of free will: it is really acknowledged, though often with much confusion by most religious and moral systems. It does not require Christian faith to bring the acknowledgment of absolute obligation to use all the liberty one has in the pursuit of his best aspirations. Nor need the non-Christian's sanction be a selfish one. The atheist may ask no other motive than the duty of bringing good into existence, whether that good consists of his own activities and states, or those of others, or material conditions productive of these.

The success of a man in actually following his best aspiration depends upon two factors: first, the clarity, force, and unity with which the object of aspiration presents itself to his mind: and second, the effort he actually makes in concentrating attention and activity upon it. No man will be a hero in the service of an ideal he has but faintly seen, nor in that of the most luminous vision, if his will-power is slight.

On both accounts the Christian claims supreme advanrage. First, the object of aspiration is not a mere multitude of particular human goods, but the will of the Creator,

the one highest good, so far as that can be imparted, and is imparted, to the created universe; an object, therefore, which has a natural power to move the will out of all proportion to any other. And it is the very work of Revelation to make this object effectively known to man, that is, in such fashion as to command his desire. Second, the Christian hopes to have received in the grace of the Holy Spirit a power to conform his act to this supreme aspiration.

Kant thought that if I am to recognize the highest good as highest, when presented to me by Revelation, I must already have the pattern of it in my heart to recognize it by. In that case I already know what is "revealed." That is an error. The faculty of judgment is a faculty of recognizing which is better of two objects or more. In order to acknowledge *Hamlet* as the best of plays I do not need an innate knowledge of *Hamlet* but only a power of comparing it with other works. The same is true of my recognition of the true good when presented: I had no knowledge of it before—except *sub quadam confusione*—but when I really see it, I can know it to be superior to all else I know. The object itself instructs us. But in the case of the highest good, I am not, in fact, free to recognize this. Good can only be apprehended as such with the co-operation of desire. Mine is warped so that I cannot see it to begin with, and therefore the presentation of the good objectively is only possible if it is accompanied by the subjective correction of aspiration. This is the work of the Holy Spirit, and there is no longer any sense in talking of a "capacity" I have for His action upon me. The only capacity I need is that I should be a mind, in order that there may be something there for Revelation to illumine. There must be a mind to use light when it has come, there must be desire and will, to be clothed with the love of God shed abroad in the heart, otherwise God would

not be redeeming but creating anew; but there need be no other innate power beyond these faculties existing in a more or less degree of perversion. Their freedom before grace need be only such that they *exist*, not such that they are capable of response to God apart from God's enabling action. For discovering the various degrees of perversion and perfection before grace, there is nothing like the observation of instances.

If we speak of the supreme good as our supreme motive, it may appear that we are depersonalizing the relation between us and God, and this has led some to prefer to interpret the claim of the Divine Will upon us as "an absolute personal claim" rather than as the duty to realize intrinsic good. But "an absolute personal claim" is difficult to understand, if taken alone. No person has any claim upon us that we should further his purposes unless these purposes are good, either intrinsically or as a means to other good; so that a personal claim itself needs the sanction of intrinsic goodness. We may say in another sense that all persons have an absolute claim on us, because they are all the creatures of God, and doubtless God has a good to be realized through them; which good we are bound to try to discover and to foster—not because they now actively desire it, but because it is good. Our duty to God is the opposite—an absolute duty to promote His actual purposes, for they are simply good: none at all to promote the realization of good in Him, for He has and is it all.

The sanction, then, of our obedience is the supreme and sole independent worth of His existence, which He extends to others according to the capacity he assigns them. But His existence is life and spirit, and, therefore, it is true enough that in subjecting ourselves to His activity and aspiring after Him we are moved by emotions of reaction to a person and not a principle—and that, no doubt,

is the substance of the contention that we have been criticizing.

Aspiration after true good, and the loyalty of the will thereto, constitutes the spirituality of man, and the realizing in him of God's image. It is the co-operation of his whole self, and not his abstract intellect alone, with reason, in the sense not of a mere ratiocinative power, but of the faculty for grasping truth. So the man becomes, and not merely possesses, rationality. God, in willing His own existence, wills absolute good. Man is the image of God in so far as he both has a will and wills the supreme good according to his ability. To will one's self as God wills Himself would be to realize not the image but the parody and blasphemy of God.

Such an actualizing of true humanity has its true pattern completed in faith towards God through Christ. But there exists much aspiration after the true good in ignorance of its true nature, and much loyalty of will in seconding it. In men that are sane, such active rationality is never quite extinct, and there, just in such proportion as it is found, is a vestige of the image of God. But once again, as we said above of total depravity, if we wish to adopt the eschatological point of view, we may say that the image of God is lost in those that are lost—in those whose apprehension of good is insufficient to bring them to the attainment of final and immovable rationality, that is, an absolute dwelling of their desire upon God. But if we speak not of the lost but of those that are being lost, then we must speak also of those that *are losing* the image of God.

## 7. CONCLUSION

In conclusion we will return to our beginning. Christianity asserts indeed that there is a true nature of man, for that

is the Creator's intention, actual in the Divine mind and never wholly unactualized in men if they are men at all. Of this true human nature men can and do become aware, not through speculative deduction, but piecemeal in the recognition of what is good for man. For such recognition the favouring conditions are sensible reflection, honest intention, and a right relation with God.

Christianity, therefore, does not come before the world with an ideology about man, the rival to several others. Those others it must condemn as forms of idolatry, but not by substituting an idol of its own. The Church's first mission is to re-create the right relation with God, or rather to be the instrument of God for such a work. Concerning the Gospel of redemption, others have written eloquently in this book, and it would be superfluous to repeat what they have said about man's fall and its divine remedy.

But the Church has a second mission besides. She knows the humanity as well as the deity of Christ: she exhibits the good for man shown forth in His conscience and life, and in the life and conscience of the saints ever since: and this supplies in part a guide to action, and on the basis of it she must utter the divine law in such detail as her vision allows or men's need demands. We have suggested some of the heads under which the distinctively Christian teaching is likely to fall. But the codified experience of the true conscience in Christ cannot be treated as an oracle which will answer all questions. History does not wholly repeat itself, and a new situation will require a new decision, which cannot be deduced simply from established principles. Such a decision, if it is right, cannot indeed be out of harmony with the mind of the Church hitherto: but harmony is a difficult thing to dogmatize upon: it cannot be settled by syllogizing.

But however difficult the process of forming judgments, the Church must judge whenever she thinks that a

judgment, either vital or valuable, can be given; and she must judge, among other things, the state. Her judgments in this sphere will (on the evidence of what proceeds) differ from those of others only in being more purely ethical. She must refuse every assumption of the unquestioned value of any political aim: everything must be judged according to the part it can play in the realization of true human nature in the many, according to the Church's vision of what that nature is.

State action must always present itself to the Church in a double aspect. Every deliberate human act can be regarded as a mere event, likely to lead to consequences good, bad, or indifferent. But equally it can be regarded as language more effective than words; the eloquent expression of the agent's mind. So every act of the state is an event likely to produce consequences by the ordinary sequence of cause and effect; but also it is the expression of a doctrine in the minds of those who stand behind it. A measure for physical education is an instrument by which the bodies of the educable will be affected: it is also an expression of the value attached by its authors to bodily welfare. It may be purely beneficial in the first regard, but in the second be put forward in such a way as to preach materialism.

The Church *qua* Church is perhaps more concerned with the second aspect than the first; if, indeed any comparison can be drawn. For the doctrine of life, silently preached by state action, may be to the Christian simply false. It is less often that he can judge the probable effect of measures to be simply deleterious, or demonstrably unjust. For he does not suppose that state action can realize the ideal without defect. No state measure will be perfectly just or unmixedly useful to all inhabitants of a partly unregenerate world. It is a matter of finding the least bad alternative.

Moreover, the Church *qua* Church is concerned first with spiritual truth, and, therefore, with combating the practical expression of falsehood by all the means in her power. It is much harder for her to judge, through channels of ecclesiastical organization, what practical tendency the maintenance or change of any institution will have towards promoting or hindering her ideal for human life: except, indeed, when it is a question of her own freedom of spiritual action being extended or diminished.

This is the inevitable misery of the Church: she must fight for the right to judge not only principles and doctrines expressed in the state, but also the ethical expediency of measures and institutions. And yet she cannot expect often to be either inwardly united or practically wise in judging the expediencies of the moment. But neither can she fall back on established precedent alone, and treat new situations as cases of old rules. She will often, then, cut a foolish figure: but she will be at least illustrating in act the ethical and spiritual judgment of state affairs, and that is more important sometimes than the prestige of ecclesiastical infallibility. If we have any belief, however dim, in our guidance by the divine reason, we must suppose that Christians uttering and comparing their reflections on the ethical expediency of politics will be contributing towards the formation of a right judgment in the end, whatever the ineptitude or disunion of their first suggestions.

# THE CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING OF MAN

*by*

WALTER MARSHALL HORTON

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## I. THE CONTEMPORARY DEVALUATION OF MAN

In this second quarter of the twentieth century, modern man is better prepared than at the turn of the century to hear and understand a Christian word addressed to him, on the subject of his own nature and condition. Then, his self-valuation was vastly inflated, and he viewed his religious advisers with a mixture of amusement and contempt; now, he has gone through a sobering process of deflation, and is ready to listen, if not with much hope, at least with some interest, to any one who offers him a heartening word of counsel.

Victor Monod, of the Faculty of Protestant Theology in Strasbourg, has recently written a remarkable book[1] in which this contemporary *Devaluation of Man* is vividly portrayed. He points out that the sense of human worth and dignity is largely based upon two peculiarly human devices by which primitive man very early showed his superiority over other animals: the use of *tools*, by which he has asserted his dominion over *things in space*; and the making of *agreements and contracts*, whereby he has asserted his dominance over *events in time*. Toward the close of the nineteenth century, science and technology seemed to have brought these two ancient means of prediction and control to such a pitch of perfection that man began to see himself as veritable Lord of Creation, and Swinburne could sing "Glory to Man in the highest, for Man is the Master of Things!" To-day, after the disillusionments of the World War and World Depression, man's sense of his own value has ebbed to the zero-point. He begins to suspect that in passing from the tool to the

[1] *Devalorisation de l'homme*, by Victor Monod, Paris, Alcan, 1935.

machine, he has overreached himself and lost the power he possessed in grasping for more. A workman with a tool in his hand has worth, because without his skill the tool is useless; but as the tool develops into the power-driven machine, the workman becomes less and less important, until at last a single easily replaceable employee stands watching a whole vast roomful of machinery, occasionally pushing a button or throwing a lever, while solar energy in some one of its various guises does the real work. And in a world where machines have thus got the upper hand, future events are no longer predictable. Contracts and agreements, whose central importance for human society is attested by the immense care with which their sanctity has been guarded ever since the days of Hammurabi, have in our generation been rendered null and void by the growing unpredictability of the course of events. In contemporary society, legal contracts are continually being voided on the plea of "unforeseeable circumstances"; and international agreements are proverbially less enduring than the paper on which they are written.

What impends under these circumstances is not merely the breakdown of ancient moral sanctions; it is, as M. Monod insists, the breakdown of *morale itself* which underlies all codes of morals. Instead of being the "Master of Things," modern man has become the servant of things, the plaything of untamable forces and events. Like the Apprentice Sorcerer, he has released by his scientific magic all sorts of powers which he cannot control, and stands helplessly watching the havoc these forces are creating, while he waits for some Master to return and put things in order. Or to use a figure of Bergson's, man is now, with his globe-encircling mechanical devices, like an immeasurably over-developed body, whose animating mind is "too little to fill it, too weak

to direct it." Unless he can be aroused from his apathy and given new morale, he will allow the present disastrous drift of events to proceed mechanically toward the chaos for which it is headed without lifting a finger to save himself from destruction.

Some Christian thinkers have seen in this current deflation or devaluation of man the means of inducing in our contemporaries a mood of humility meet for repentance. To deepen men's self-distrust seems like the quickest and most efficacious way of leading them to trust in God—or at least the most opportune way at the moment—and so there are found many Christian pessimists in our time, ever ready to answer the wails of secular pessimists with antiphonal groans, when the plight of modern man comes up for discussion. Yet it is a dangerous stratagem to exalt God at the expense of man; almost, though not quite so dangerous as to exalt man at the expense of God. Faith in God and faith in man are so interdependent that we cannot utterly despair of man without undermining faith in God, just as we cannot ignore God without undermining faith in man. If the godless secularism of modern times leads inevitably to that loss of trust in humanity which is so evident to-day, the attempt to bludgeon man into abject submission to God may lead with equal logicality to a new wave of atheism.

Christian teaching is not merely guilty of bad strategy when it thus succumbs to contemporary pessimism; it is false to its own Gospel. The Christian Gospel, when rightly received, *humbles* man to a sense of grateful dependence upon the power, grace, and forgiveness of God; it does not *humiliate* him nor break his spirit. To the proud and self-sufficient it speaks sternly of One who has often, in the course of history, "put down the mighty from their seats and exalted the humble and

meek." But in the same breath, it declares that man is God's child, made in the divine image, destined for an exalted post, as God's vicegerent on this planet, so soon as he learns to find his joy in obedience to his Father's will. It does not crush him as a "worm of the dust"; it stirs him by showing him that he is betraying a great responsibility and missing a supreme opportunity. In short, the Christian Gospel has precisely that steadying word of mingled warning and encouragement which is needed to put fresh heart and saving contrition into our sick and dazed contemporaries—if they could but grasp its meaning.

## 2. "FACT" AND "TRUTH" IN THE CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING OF MAN

The chief reason why it is difficult to convey the Christian understanding of man to our generation is that secular thought and religious thought have been pursuing divergent paths in Western Christendom since the close of the Middle Ages.

Medieval Christian thought, as represented in the philosophy of Aquinas and the poetry of Dante, had the great merit of uniting the secular and religious understanding of man in one comprehensive view. In the medieval synthesis, Aristotle's scientific theory of man as a rational and political animal found an honourable place, subordinate to the higher verities of the Christian Gospel which alone could reveal man's ultimate source and goal, but nevertheless part of the same hierarchical scheme of things.

What John Macmurray claims as always true of religious thought "when it is real" was emphatically true of medieval Christian thought—it was "alive both to the

facts of the empirical situation and to a truth which is denied by the facts, and which is, for all that, their eternal essence."[1] What the philosophy of Aquinas did for the educated classes, the popular lore embedded in the carving of the French cathedrals did for the rank and file—it related every natural fact to some mystic meaning and placed the daily round of life in constant juxtaposition with Heaven and Hell. Religion and life were one, not two; religious mysteries were half-hidden, half-revealed in precisely *this* world wherein men lived and walked; and as Dante's *Divine Comedy* illustrates, astronomy itself was correlated point by point with moral theology. The synthesis was too perfect to last, of course, for not all the "facts" accepted by the medieval mind were really facts, and not all its "truths" were true, or germane to the facts with which they were fancifully connected; but until some such relation of fact and truth is recovered in our time, religious and secular thought will continue to be irrelevant to one another.

Religious thought cannot escape its share of the blame for the loss of balance in the modern understanding of man. In Luther's commentary on *Romans*, he went out of his way to express contempt for the scholastic and Aristotelian attempt to study man *as he is*, empirically: "Whoever considers the essences and operations of creatures, rather than their aspirations and expectations, is without doubt stupid and blind, and knows not that creatures are *creatures*."[2] In this remarkable saying, and many like it, the great Reformer exhibited profound insight into that deeper religious "truth" about man which outruns and seems to contradict the empirical facts of human nature; but he erred when he isolated this higher truth (embodied in the Biblical view of man's

[1] *Creative Society*, p. 69.
[2] M. A. H. Stomps, *Die Anthropologie Martin Luthers*, p. 15.

divine origin and destiny) from all empirical knowledge of man as he is.

From that day to this there has been a tendency in conservative Protestant thought to ignore, suppress, or deny all facts that seem to collide with the Biblical view of man; and to draw man's portrait directly from sacred texts, instead of from life in the light of Christian revelation. The animal ancestry of man, for example, has been denied and opposed by Christian theologians on religious grounds to their own ultimate discomfiture; while at the same time a theological lay figure of "the natural man" has been constructed which no layman would recognize as natural. Only a few literary geniuses like Pascal have known how to present the Christian estimate of the "greatness and misery of man" in terms that actually strike home to the lay conscience.

When religious thought thus withdrew from the world of common life, it was to be expected that secular thought would increasingly ignore it, and try to solve the problem of man in wholly factual and naturalistic terms. What one gets, when one thus attempts to define man's place in the world without reference to God, is a curiously unstable estimate of his importance, fluctuating wildly between Nothing and Everything.

It is as though modern man, since his emancipation from medievalism, had been exhibiting the typical reactions of a pampered only child suddenly put out in the cold world to shift for himself. By turns, he swaggers with self-importance and shivers with fright. In the snug medieval world it seemed self-evident that man was God's only child. But when the Copernican revolution and its sequel set him in a vast impersonal universe, where he was no longer at the centre but lost amid the immensities and the eternities, he shrank and trembled and cried out with Pascal, "The silence of these infinite

spaces frightens me!" Finding the notion of his own insignificance quite unendurable, he reverted to pride and boastfulness when it occurred to him that *his own thought* had forged the picture of the universe which so terrified him. By the magic formula, "The world is my idea," the Copernican revolution was undone and the universe made to revolve again around man as its centre. At the height of the idealistic movement, men made and remade systems of philosophy as if they were indeed creating worlds by fiat and demolishing them with a wave of the hand. Darwinism gave a great blow to this idealistic habit of thought and set *homo sapiens* down with a thud among his humble mammalian ancestors; but after a brief period of humiliation he recovered his pride again—for was he not the last and highest product of evolution, the end toward which the whole creation moved, the sole point at which the cosmic process became conscious of itself and devised scientific means for its own endless improvement?

Now again, since the World War our human sense of worth is deflated; but there is nothing in the sphere of mere fact to prevent our continuing to alternate between despair and megalomania in the future as in the past. Religion alone—and that, for us, means the Christian revelation—can adequately interpret facts which by themselves are ambiguous or meaningless. God alone—and that, for us, means the God revealed in Christ—can mediate between man and nature, and decide which is subordinate to the other. If Christianity is actually to rescue modern man from the twin dangers of egotism and humiliation, one thing must be clearly understood: that Christian revelation is not a ready-made system of knowledge, contending with scientific knowledge on the same factual plane, but a set of extraordinary facts—Israel, Christ, the Church—in which Christian faith finds

the key to the meaning of *all* facts. The Biblical view of man is authoritative, not as a literal account of how he was created and what he is composed of, but as an interpretation of his relationship to the Ultimate Being, God, whereby his relations to his natural and social environment are clarified, and the meaning of his existence is defined.

The Biblical anthropology is most simply and clearly expressed in Psalm viii, where man is described as a tiny helpless creature, a mere babe, looking up in awe at the high heavens which dwarf him into insignificance, yet raised to a position of dominance and dignity "a little lower than the angels," with the whole animate creation "under his feet," because the Maker of this vast world is "mindful" of him and "visits" him. This account of man's *place* finds its echo in the Genesis account of his *creation* (out of the "dust of the earth," yet in the "image of God") and in the New Testament Gospel of his *redemption* (by a God so "mindful" of his need as to "visit" him personally in the midst of his afflictions and die for his sins). The Thomistic doctrine of man (as a creature situated on the border-line between corporeal and purely spiritual substances, *in confinio corporalium et separatarum substantiarum*, lowest among intelligent beings but first in the order of material forms, reflecting imperfectly in his progressive and responsive activity the *actus purus* that belongs to God alone) simply applies the Biblical interpretation of man's origin, rank, and destiny to the data of Aristotelian science, the best approximation to "fact" which the Middle Ages possessed. It gives scholastic precision to the Biblical idea that man is "a little lower than the angels."[1] It is the business of contemporary

[1] The word *elohîm*, "divine beings," literally includes God and all other heavenly beings; but since the medieval doctrine of angels sharpened the gradations in the heavenly hierarchy, "angels" translates the Psalmist's meaning very well.

theology to use the same ancient clue for the elucidation of the meaning of human life in its modern setting. All the empirical data which scientific anthropology, physiology, psychology, sociology, etc., have been heaping up, together with the empirical insights of modern novelists and modern saints, are as germane to the modern Christian understanding of man as was the philosophy of Aristotle to the medieval Christian understanding of man. But these empirical data are unintelligible except in the light of the Biblical revelation of man's more-than-empirical source, nature, and end.

Let us try briefly to organize our contemporary empirical knowledge of man in terms of the Biblical understanding of man, using medieval ideas from time to time as convenient middle terms. In so doing we shall find ourselves passing successively from three great groups of "facts" to corresponding "truths," which Christian faith asserts to be *the truth of these very facts*:

1. From the general facts of scientific anthropology, to the truth that man is a great and marvellous work of God his Creator, made in the divine image out of humble materials.

2. From the special fact of human frustration and self-contradiction, to the truth that man is a sinner, responsible in the sight of God his Judge.

3. From the unique fact of the new life in Christ and the Church, to the truth that man is potentially the beloved son and heir of God his Redeemer.

## 3. MAN AS CREATURE

The biological, psychological, and sociological facts which form the scientific substructure of any adequate doctrine of man are so numerous and various that it is difficult

to view them in perspective. Faulty perspective is especially likely to result from the circumstance that human physiology, as a part of the relatively well developed general science of biology, has attained a degree of accuracy and certainty only excelled by that of the physical sciences; while psychology and sociology are only sciences in the making, full of unclarified philosophical assumptions and disturbed by the clamour of rival schools; yet quite plainly the most characteristic and distinctive facts about man fall in these only partly explored fields. Dr. Alexis Carrel, in his popular book *Man the Unknown,* has made a valiant pioneer attempt to introduce proper perspective into scientific anthropology, by briefly summarizing the physiological knowledge of which he is an acknowledged master, and combining it with such psychological and sociological facts as seem to him highly probable—including such commonly questioned phenomena as the occurrence of telepathy and healing miracles. In so doing, Dr. Carrel has made it evident, I think, that the modern science of man, with all its distinguished attainments, has not really destroyed the applicability of the main concepts of Aristotelian anthropology which formed the substructure of the medieval Christian doctrine of man; nor has it abolished the necessity of a more-then-scientific doctrine of man's ultimate origin, nature, and destiny. Let us endeavour to pour our modern data into the moulds of medieval Christian thought and see if they spill over.

Aristotelian biology, in its bearing upon the doctrine of man, may be summarized in the proposition that *man is an animal*; psychology, in the proposition that *man is a rational animal*; sociology, in the proposition that *man is a social animal* (*zöon politicon*). All three of these propositions hold good in modern terms.

### (*a*) MAN IS AN ANIMAL

While Aristotle's astronomy has been completely upset by Copernicus, his biology has not been so fundamentally transformed by Darwin. What the Stagirite saw as a hierarchy of fixed forms has been changed into a succession of evolving species lineally descended from one another; but the order of descent substantially corresponds to the ascending order in the hierarchy. What he called the "vegetative" and "sensitive" souls are still recognizable as the organic and sensory functions which man shares with the simpler forms of organism that preceded him in the evolutionary series.

As an animal, descended from lower animals and carrying active or vestigial reminders of his descent in his physiological structure, man has many definite limitations which cannot be overstepped without paying physiological penalties: first disease, finally death. It is Dr. Carrel's sober opinion that modern civilization has imposed a top-heavy burden upon man's physique which no animal is capable of enduring; and while scientific medicine is decreasing the incidence of infectious diseases, it cannot check the increase of degenerative and nervous diseases unless man returns to a manner of life more in conformity with his nature as an animal. No animal can escape the law that the mechanisms of physiological adaptation suffer atrophy without physical exercise and hardship; and from such atrophy to nervous strain, degeneration and death is a short road. "In successive generations of pure-bred dogs, nervousness is often observed to increase. . . . This phenomenon occurs in subjects brought up under artificial conditions, living in comfortable kennels, and provided with choice food quite different from that of their ancestors, the shep-

herds, which fought and defeated the wolves."[1] A part of the prophetic message of the Christian Church to modern man must be a warning based on physiology: "Act within the limits of your animal constitution; or by God's law, laid down in your bones and tissues, you and your line will perish." We must add, however, that some of the anthropological doctrines now being promulgated in the name of science, especially in the field of "race," are to be rejected, not only because they are unchristian, but because they are based on bad biology.

### (*b*) MAN IS A RATIONAL ANIMAL

"The soul is the aspect of ourselves that is specific of our nature and distinguishes man from the other animals." This might be a citation from medieval philosophy; it is actually Dr. Carrel's formulation[2] of what he calls the "operational concept of the mind" required by modern science. Scientific psychology is in fact quite compatible with the Aristotelian and Thomistic conception of the soul; whereas it is hard to reconcile with the extreme dualism of Plato and Descartes. A view of the human rational soul which conceives of it as the *form* or *activity* of the body, intimately united with a whole hierarchy of animal functions such as nutrition, reproduction, sensation and memory, is a view which makes the soul a proper object for scientific study, and accommodates itself easily to changes in the empirical data it seeks to synthesize.

If there is any point at which the Aristotelian view of the specific nature of human intelligence needs basic revision, it is to be found in its excessive emphasis upon

[1] Carrel, *Man the Unknown*, pp. 157, 158. New York, Harpers, 1935.

[2] Ibid., p. 118.

pure intellectual contemplation (*theoria*) as man's highest activity. Disinterested love of truth, and joy in truth, have indeed found their best expression in modern science; but the scientific study of man's early development has made it clear that his supremacy over other animals is fundamentally based upon a more "instrumental" use of intelligence, wherein moments of intuitive contemplation occur as part of a rhythmic alternating flow, from action toward imagination and back again to action.

Human intelligence begins with the ability to manipulate objects between the prehensile thumb and forefinger so as to make them serve as means to the ends which imagination envisages. Physical tools, language, and free ideas—culminating in long chains of mathematical propositions or poetic symbols—are among the most important improvements by which the process of fitting means to ends, and revising ends in the light of consequences, has been perfected. Through these and other inventions, man has been enabled to handle his environment with a degree of flexibility of which no other animal is capable. He is the most adaptable and teachable of animals, responding to a change of circumstance not by growing a new organ, but by manipulating environmental factors until they serve his purposes. He has all the fundamental drives and impulses which are called instincts in other animals; but as Professor C. H. Cooley has said, animal instincts are to human, rationally adaptable drives what a musical-box playing set tunes is to a piano on which all manner of tunes can be played. Aristotle's *Ethics* give large recognition to this instrumental use of intelligence as a control over conduct—in fact, it constitutes the basis of his distinction between the purely intellectual and genuinely moral virtues—but his Greek scorn for the artisan classes, and his own profession as a leisured philosophical observer of life, prevented his recognizing

the supplemental relation between action and contemplation.

All that Christian theology needs, as empirical basis for its doctrines of human freedom and immortality, is this conception of man as a rational animal. The chief grounds of these doctrines are not simply empirical, but metaphysical and theological. It is because God is man's eternal Source and Goal that human acts of volition can never be completely determined by the immediate and apparent but transient goods which first catch his attention; and it is this same dissatisfaction with things transient, this same restless hunger for things eternal, which is the principal ground of faith in his immortality. All that is necessary to provide an empirical basis for this act of faith is to insist that man is not merely driven from behind by compulsive animal instincts, nor merely capable of "rationalizing" these blind urges in the delusive way described by Freudian psychology, but possesses a genuine capacity for receiving his motives from rationally envisaged ends. Genuinely rational motives are always struggling with irrational drives, and the mastery they attain is a precarious mastery; but it is an empirically verifiable fact that motivation can flow from reason toward desire, as well as in the opposite direction. The Christian doctrine of man admits the power of these compulsive forces in man to which Freud and Marx call attention, and it adds thereto the power of sin; but against all theories that reduce man to a mere irresponsible puppet, it protests, *both in the name of Christ and in the name of sound philosophy.*

### (*c*) MAN IS A SOCIAL ANIMAL

The Aristotelian sociology may be summed up in the famous description of man as a "political animal," or

more fully in the remark, toward the end of the *Ethics* (X, 1180 *a*), that "he who is to be good must have been brought up and habituated well, and then live accordingly under good institutions, and never do what is low and mean, either against or with his will." The "institutions" here referred to are not merely *political* institutions, but specifically include private institutions like the family. Aristotle is perfectly convinced that the individual cannot attain his true good except in loyal relationship to society; but he is equally convinced that the best society is not the totalitarian state. The Spartan state, the nearest approach to complete collectivism that came under his observation, was not his ideal. "Private training," he remarked, "has advantages over Public . . . the individual will be most exactly attended to under Private care, because so each will be more likely to obtain what is expedient for him" (Ibid., 1180).

This general position, that the individual needs society for his own fulfilment, but thrives best in a society which does not swallow him up in the mass, is entirely confirmed by modern observation. Dr. Carrel remarks that our "visible frontiers," the skin and the digestive-respiratory mucosas, are quite plainly not our real frontiers, but only "a plane of cleavage indispensable to our action." As the body takes in chemical substances, selecting from them those which tend to build up its individuality, so the mental life takes in from its social environment impressions and influences which tend to build up individual character. But the individual who becomes only a "unit in a school," or a "unit in the herd" in some great factory, city or collectivist state, is stunted in his growth. "In order to reach his real strength, the individual requires the relative isolation and the attention of the restricted social group consisting of the family."[1]

[1] Carrell, op. cit., chap. vii, esp. p. 270.

Christianity has always had to combat the extremes of individualism and collectivism, in the interest of its own characteristic conception of the Church as a body with many members, a community of free individuals. It would be too much to say that secular science and philosophy, by themselves, lead to any such exalted conception of social life; but this much can fairly be claimed—that in her present struggle with the tendency toward anarchic individualism in democratic, capitalistic countries, and with the tendency toward tyrannical collectivism in fascistic or communistic countries, the Church has the support of the great masters of social science and philosophy, both ancient and modern. She speaks not only with the voice of faith, but with the voice of knowledge; and what she has learned from "the Master of those who know" is a part, though only a part, of the Christian understanding of man.

### (*d*) MAN AS GOD'S CREATURE, MADE IN THE DIVINE IMAGE

All the facts of human physiology, psychology, and sociology, taken together, are not enough to establish the Christian view of man as God's creature, made in His image. This mass of scientific data does indeed demand philosophic interpretation; and if there is anything in the maxim that the stream cannot rise higher than its source, the most rational interpretation of man's origin is one which ascribes it to a creative principle that is more than mechanistic, more then vitalistic, and at least as intelligent as man himself. Yet this Creative Intelligence is not the Christian God. If it were, one might be content to interpret the divine image in man as St. Thomas interprets it—*reason itself*, or the power of self-determination through the envisagement of ideal ends.

But this interpretation of the divine image presupposes the Aristotelian view of God as the Unmoved Mover, creating and moving all things by pure thought, without ever coming forth from His splendid isolation into the world He has created; whereas the Christian God is a God of sacrificial love, for ever coming forth to communicate grace and truth to His creatures. The image of God, then, must be interpreted as *man's capacity to respond gratefully to the divine love that patiently seeks him out, and to show his gratitude for God's patient mercy by exhibiting a similar magnanimity to his neighbours, even though they be his enemies.*

This is that Godlikeness which Jesus held up before His disciples in the Sermon on the Mount, and which He Himself exhibited when He went to the Cross for mankind's sake, begging forgiveness for His enemies as they crucified Him. No scientific anthropology could ever prove that man is capable of Godlikeness in this sense; though it might establish the fact that, like many of his humble mammalian ancestors, he knows "how to give good gifts to his children," and to some extent is accustomed to push the attitude of loving generosity beyond the limits of the natural family, to include members of other goups for which he has a strong "we-feeling." The confirmation of this Christian view of God and man is only to be found in the non-scientific observation, that when the challenge to be Godlike is presented to him in the Gospel, man does sometimes respond to it with a disinterested, reverent, self-forgetful devotion for which his devotion to wife and child, or country, or truth, or beauty, is only a partial analogy; so that even though he fails to live up to the challenge, his conscience remains uneasy and he bows down in penitence before the God of love whom he continues to crucify.

Between Aristotle's rational, social animal and the

full Christian understanding of man, as a divinely fashioned creature capable of reflecting and transmitting the divine sacrificial love, there is a great gap that must not be minimized, and that only faith can bridge. Yet the secular, scientific portrait of man, in its modern as well as its ancient and medieval forms, needs to be incorporated in the Christian view, both as a point of contact with the secular mind, and as a needed check upon fanatical aberrations in Christian belief. If we have gone to some length to prove that the Thomistic doctrine of the natural man still very largely holds good, it is not because we believe either Aristotle or Aquinas said the last word on human nature, but because Thomistic philosophy did render full justice, in its day, to the scientific view of man which should *always* form the groundwork of Christian anthropology. The Christian view of man is the eternal truth; but unless this truth is expressed in terms of commonly accepted facts, man will not recognize it as the truth about his actual, contemporary self.

### 4. MAN AS SINNER

The facts which support the truth that man is God's creature are, to a considerable extent, both empirical and scientific. Those which support the truth that man is a sinner are empirical but in the nature of the case non-scientific, since they involve appreciative judgments of value that are beyond the scope of scientific method. It is not to the pure scientists, then, with their completely matter-of-fact view of human nature that we must go for our data, but to the novels of a Dostoievsky or the *Confessions* of a St. Augustine, checked by the specific studies of clinical psychiatrists and criminologists such as *applied* scientists.

We cannot start with sin as a recognized fact. Dr. T. Z. Koo has said that in his work as a Christian evangelist he rarely finds a man awakened to the fact that he is a sinner. It is the great saints who recognize themselves as sinners; and to do so is already to be half-delivered. But what the average man does recognize as a fact in his life is *frustration* or *conflict.* There is a widespread human acknowledgment that we are making rather a mess of things, that the longer we continue in the ordinary way of life the more confused and meaningless it gets. Great novelists, autobiographers, and psychiatrists help to clarify this common consciousness of an undefined evil that presses down upon us all.

The evil occurs in very specific forms which demand specific treatment like the various types of disease. Not every one has a completely divided will, like St. Paul or St. Augustine or Luther just before their conversions. Not every one's *experience* is as macabre as that of Dostoievsky's *Man from the Underworld.* Not every one is in danger of becoming a paranoiac, or committing burglary. Hence the infinite variety of the methods that must be employed in the cure of souls and the need of deep intuitive insight into the peculiar needs of the individual. Yet there runs through all human experience a common element which binds us together in a brotherhood of woe. It is a sense of a blockade, an isolation, an estrangement between ourselves and that which we dimly feel to be our highest good; and this blockade makes it impossible for us to trust ourselves freely and expansively to our world, as the swimmer trusts himself to the waves. Instead, we adopt a contractive attitude, dominated by fear or anger; we shrink back from life, or we allow it to drift meaninglessly on, or we hit out resentfully at all who would presume to lay an obligation upon us. And all the time, if we observe ourselves closely, we are

grudgingly conscious that we are to blame for this state of affairs; that ignorance, and finiteness, and hampering circumstance, and the pressure of animal impulse, are all insufficient to account for it. Christianity interprets this to mean that we are resisting or evading something that means our good, and with which we need to be reconciled; we are guilty sinners who must ask forgiveness and be converted.

The sense of sin and guilt has suffered a great eclipse in recent times; it is an ominous symptom. Modern man is not well, but he refuses to admit he is sick. He represses the notion of guilt; he laughs convulsively whenever "hell" and "the devil" are mentioned. No doubt the Puritan mind was morbid on these subjects and a reaction was necessary. But there is plenty of evidence in our mental hospitals that the repressed idea of guilt is still present in the contemporary mind, and bursts forth in melancholy splendour when the mask of convention is removed. Dr. Anton Boisen, who has himself twice experienced psychoses, and who as a psychiatrically trained chaplain has since observed multitudes of sufferers in mental hospitals, testifies that "The outstanding evil in all of them has been according to our findings, the sense of isolation or guilt."[1] Some, to be sure, escape from guilt through lapsing into apathy; others, through systematic delusions of grandeur which identify them with God or His representatives; but those who struggle most realistically with their actual condition, and have the best chance of being cured, are precisely those with the strongest sense of guilt. Certain schools of psychiatry try, indeed, to treat the sense of guilt as a pathological condition, and cure it by lowering the threshold of conscience; but this is simply another evasion, analogous

[1] Boisen, *The Exploration of the Inner World*, p. 150. Willetts Clark and Co., Chicago, 1936.

to that which criminals use when they give each other a sense of acceptance and forgiveness by condoning each other's crimes. The only real escape from guilt is through confession, forgiveness, and conversion.

The Christian doctrine of sin is an interpretation of *precisely* these facts with which psychiatrists and criminologists deal professionally. It asserts that we live in a world whose eternal Ground is not an inscrutable Fate, nor an indifferent and fortuitous "concourse of atoms," but a Will that is just and merciful, and seeks our deepest good. This Will has put us under hard and testing conditions, but it has implanted in us no basic impulse that is incapable of being directed to worthy ends, and it has surrounded us with gracious influences that are impeded only by the obstacles that we (or our neighbours) have thrown in their way. Hence we cannot say with Omar Khayyám,

> O Thou who man of baser clay didst make,
> And e'en with Paradise devised the snake,
> For all the sin wherewith the face of man
> Is blackened, man's forgiveness give—and take!

Rather we have to recognize that we have misused man's kingly prerogative as a rational animal by envisaging and pursuing ends that are unworthy of pursuit; and we have misused man's prerogative as a social animal by making others bear the burden of our selfishness. Old Testament prophecy interprets the woe that results from this misuse as the righteous judgment of a divine Lawgiver who never punishes us more than we deserve. The New Testament interprets it as part of the burden of a divine Sin-bearer, who suffers agony and death with us and for us, that we may turn and be reconciled with Him. Sin in the Old Testament means violation of a fair contract made with an equitable divine Ruler; in the New Testament it means swinish trampling upon a

divine magnanimity that gladly humbles itself to share our woes. If God is really like Christ no wonder we feel frustrated, divided, and guilty so long as we continue to live for ourselves, or for the baubles that most commonly attract us. Sin is what St. Augustine called it: *amor sui usque ad centemptum Dei*; and we must continue to be tormented in our minds until we learn to forget ourselves in the one love that can absorb us: the love of God, expressed in Christ-like love for our sinful and unfortunate fellow-men.

### 5. MAN AS SON AND HEIR OF GOD

The facts upon which the Christian truth of man's destiny as a son of God is based are still less extensive and still less scientific than those which support the truth that he is a sinner. All men have experienced the sting of sin, even though they fail to recognize it for what it is; but only a limited number have known the joy of redemption from sin, and adoption as God's sons and heirs. In collecting our data here, we shall get little help from such calm intellects as Aristotle or Aquinas, and much help from such passionate souls as Luther, who knew man's diviner "aspirations and expectations" as well as the angelic doctor knew his more common "essences and operations." To make the data quite contemporary, let us take as our witnesses some of those contemporary *Wrestlers with Christ* of whom Karl Pfleger has eloquently written—men like Bloy, Péguy, Soloviev, and Berdiaev, who in our own day have sounded the same heights and depths of human nature formerly explored by St. Augustine, Luther, Pascal, George Fox, and John Bunyan.

These men are sinners, they are mortal and fallible, they are chafed by their animal nature and do not know how to

master it. Even after they realize their divine sonship, and their heritage of eternal life, they fall into despair. Yet one thing they repeat in chorus: that there is an unearthly joy that lies beyond despair; that just so soon (or so often) as man decisively lets go of his life and commits it absolutely to the mysterious will that seeks him through his pain, he begins to have foretastes of the beatific vision, and knows he has found his chief end. The spectacle of Léon Bloy giving himself to the prostitute "Veronica" with an increasingly spiritual passion that first rescued and beatified them both, and afterwards, pathetically, drove them through unwise austerity into mental collapse; or of Péguy, led by his humanitarian passion for social revolution back to the religious faith of his youth, yet abstaining from baptism and communion because (unlike Bunyan's Christian) he could not bear to enter the pathway of salvation without his wife and children—such episodes as these remind us that even in our own time it is possible for men to exhibit Christ-like traits and devote themselves with complete abandon to the will of God as they understand it. In the light of such individual experiences, and the collective experience of the Church, the theory of the "divine humanity," developed by Soloviev and Berdiaev along lines suggested by Dostoievsky, has great appeal. There is, from this point of view, an eternal humanity in the nature of God, and an eternal divinity in the nature of man. The historical union of the two in Christ, the God-man, and in the Church which continues the Incarnation, is but the manifestation in time of an eternal unity of God, man, and world. Through man, redeemed by Christ to a knowledge of his true divine essence, God is to redeem all the universe, which "groaneth and travaileth until now, waiting for the revelation of the sons of God." Such a doctrine of man's essentially divine nature is at the opposite pole

from another contemporary Christian philosophy, according to which there is nothing in man to respond to the grace of God, and God must, so to speak, knock a hole in man in order to find entrance. The first of these views presupposes the Eastern Orthodox belief in man's capacity for deification, whereas our stern neo-Calvinists insist upon the great gulf that remains fixed between Creator and creature, and the essential sinfulness of the "saved" man—*simul justus et peccator.*

We shall be closest to the authentic Christian interpretation of man's higher nature if we avoid both of these extremes. As seen in the life and teachings of the Christ Himself, divine humanity remains conscious of its clear distinction from God, and its humble dependence upon Him, as the source of all being and all goodness. "There is none good save one, even God." Yet in His dealing with even the worst of men, Christ constantly made appeal to a hidden goodness in their nature, a capacity of response to God's mercy, which sometimes flashed forth suddenly and dramatically, as in the case of Zacchaeus, and sometimes ripened slowly, with many set-backs, as in the case of Peter. *The Christian Gospel is not preached, where there is no appeal to this capacity.* Where the appeal is consistently made, as in the Salvation Army with its slogan: "A man may be down, but he's never out," the response is of a volume and a depth that should leave no doubt in any unbiased mind. Lives are changed, when the potential good in man is believed in, patiently, in the face of repeated rebuffs. Failures occur, besetting sins remain; man is still a creature, living by reflected light and borrowed spontaneity. Ancient sins, embodied in persistent institutions, cast their shadow over the redeemed, and fill the Church with conflict. But God has implanted His image in the depths of man's soul, and by His grace, embodied in the Christ, has begun to pierce the thick

layers of sinful habit and disposition with which man's persistent misuse of his capacities has overlaid these depths. Whenever the grace of Christ, mediated by Christian love and faith, and manifested in the fellowship of the universal Church, actually pierces to the bottom of man's heart, he begins to be restless; and this restlessness will continue until he sits at last in the place which God has designed for him: that of vicegerent of the divine domain on this planet, administering all its rich resources wisely and generously, in reverent service of his Creator and Redeemer and in love of all his fellow creatures.

When will modern man return to this understanding of his origin, place, and destiny? We do not know. *When* he does, he will be delivered from his alternating moods of pride and terror, and recover a sense of his true worth. In obedience to the Will of God, he will find his peace. *Until* he does, he must continue to seek his chief end where it is not to be found—in himself, or in the institutions he has created—and as each idol collapses in its turn, he must expect to be delivered over to a deeper and deeper sense of the misery and meaninglessness of existence.

# THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF MAN

*by*

PIERRE MAURY

# THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF MAN

BEFORE examining the content of Christian anthropology, it is well to recall what we are to understand by a *Christian* doctrine. Such a doctrine systematically expounds truths of *faith*, that is, truths which are known in a specific way, differently from all the other human ways of knowledge, and consequently subject to a specific standard of judgment which is different from all the other human criteria of truth. Concretely, a Christian doctrine expounds realities which are known by the miracle of the Holy Spirit who reveals them to us; and it is subject to one sole criterion: its conformity with Holy Scripture, the witness of the Revelation. Thus it is not because it is more satisfying for the mind, or because it does justice more completely to the rich variety of human experience, that a doctrine is true for the Church; it is solely because it is Biblical.

It is particularly important to recall this definition when one is taking up the problem of anthropology. For in this domain it seems at first sight to be quite unnecessary to have recourse to an external revelation in order to understand the object studied.

When we are dealing with man, are we not dealing with ourselves—that is, with the reality, perhaps the only reality, that we can attain immediately? Here it is not the same as in the other sciences; the subject and the object coincide. The famous formula "Know thyself" would thus define very exactly the unique situation of anthropology. It is the same self which knows and is known; it has only to apprehend itself. It is true that philosophical criticism has contested this affirmation of pure idealism; it has questioned or even denied that the man who knows himself and the man who is known are equivalent. And

that is why there have been and always will be very different if not antagonistic anthropologies. But it remains true that a doctrine of man naturally appears to all thinkers to be one of our innate possibilities. Does not any talk of an anthropology which supposes or implies any other factor than man himself simply ruin its strictness in advance and sally out into the realm of chimerical speculations? It is this conviction that anthropology constitutes a privileged field of human knowledge which has incited many Christian thinkers to imagine comparisons, or even *rapprochements* such as are impossible elsewhere, between secular philosophies and Christian theology. Is not man always the same? Is it not enough that every one should employ the same application and the same good faith in order to know him? Thus, according to several theologians, the very lively curiosity about human nature which one sees being shown in systems very remote from the Christian faith might furnish the latter with a special opportunity of establishing its truth.

It is also true that at all times certain theologians have upheld the view that faith is only the fulfilment of a possibility latent in every man, and that the analysis of the immediate data of knowledge, such as may be undertaken by natural philosophy, must necessarily issue in a demand for the supernatural, even the Christian supernatural. Numerous expositions have been given to the famous formula "*anima naturaliter christiana*," such, for example, as the following: every man bears within him the need to transcend himself, the knowledge of his existence involves a feeling of insufficiency, and the Christian revelation corresponds to that aspiration, prolongs it and satisfies it; or again: every man at grips with his inner contradiction, torn between his reality and his ideal, seeks for a solution to that duality, and the Christian revelation is the synthesis of these antagonistic elements; or again:

every man suffers by the limitation of time and space, and dreams of eternity, that is, the abolition of these limits, and the Christian revelation proposes to him a "beyond" which transcends these barriers which shut him in. In theological language, these thinkers consider that "grace fulfils nature"; they do indeed agree that grace transcends nature, but they maintain that it is in continuity with it and that even when it contradicts it, grace still takes nature as its point of departure. Every man would thus be a potential Christian, and that by nature and not by an absolute miracle. By developing his latent possibilities with the aid of God, he could "become what he is." For these theologians—of whom Roman Catholicism furnishes the most eminent representatives—the natural knowledge of man by himself must logically fulfil itself in the Christian anthropology, which thus becomes the crown of all true anthropology: human ethics postulate Christian ethics, rational metaphysics aspire to the theology which will be their fulfilment, the natural sociology of justice and love is a stage on the way towards a doctrine of the communion of saints.

It must be categorically affirmed that that is not the Biblical conception. The Biblical conception differs radically from any philosophy or theology whose starting-point is the reality of man as known by experience. For the Bible, in regard to man as well as in regard to all its others objects, the Divine Revelation is never for a moment to be reduced to a philosophy, and the knowledge of faith is never assimilable, comparable, or continuous with natural experience. To the postulate of every non-Christian anthropology that the knowledge of self has its origin in the consciousness and observation of self, the Bible opposes its own postulate that man cannot know himself, "in his light he does not see light."[1] Every non-Christian an-

[1] Cf. Psalm xxxvi. 9.

thropology admits that when man asks "Who am I?" he knows what he is asking and has the possibility of recognizing in himself or outside himself the truth of the satisfactory reply to that question. The Bible on the contrary, while it recognizes that this question is a true question, affirms not only that this true question cannot find any satisfactory solution in any human reflection, but also that it is true and truly put only when it is put, not *by* man, but *to* man. For the Bible, it is God who asks "Adam, where art thou?" and not Adam who asks himself. In a word, the problem of our life truly exists, according to the Bible, only if it comes to us *from God* and not from ourselves.

Thus, to be really Christian, it is necessary that anthropology, like the other theological doctrines, should give up taking as its starting-point the same knowledge as the secular anthropologies take. Much more than this—it must refuse to be compared with them and subjected to their criteria. Just as metaphysics are incapable of judging the truth of the Revelation, which on the contrary judges all philosophy, so an anthropology according to the Bible cannot be judged by any secular anthropology; it judges them all.

The limits within which an anthropological doctrine may lay claim to the title of Christian having been thus defined, what must the content of this doctrine be? One might undertake the task of determining this according to the Biblical Revelation in several ways. The simplest and strictest is undoubtedly to do it by reference to the essential object of that Revelation: God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. To know who is man, it is necessary and sufficient to know that God was made *man* and what that incarnation means. It is in the assumption of human nature by Jesus Christ that we can know the

mystery of that nature. Certainly the humanity of Jesus Christ is unique, since it is that of the Son of God; certainly, just as He was true man, the Mediator was true God, and so we cannot know His reality by starting from our own. But that absolute distinction does not suppress anything of His voluntary identification of Himself with our humanity. If we cannot define Him according to what we are, we must allow ourselves to be defined by Him as He is in His incarnation, for He "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin,"[1] and as for that capital difference of nature between Him and us, we cannot forget that He was "made . . . sin for us."[2] Thus it is the reality of Christ which can reveal to us our human reality.

Here it is necessary to guard against a possible misunderstanding. This would consist in defining man according to his knowledge of Jesus Christ and reducing anthropology to a doctrine of the believer, of the "new man," or in other words to absorb anthropology in soteriology. It is indeed true that in Christian dogmatics no knowledge of man is possible outside a knowledge of the salvation of man; it is true that only the Cross can reveal to us the meaning of the Fall, and only the Resurrection and its promise can unveil to us the creation in the image of God.[3] But just because we have to do with the revelation of a real fall and with the promise of a real resurrection—in a word, just because a real reconciliation is wrought in Christ incarnate—it is evident that there does exist on the authority of the Bible a doctrine of the nature which is fallen, condemned to death, unreconciled. Even if this nature is known only in the Divine act which makes a "new creature" of it, it is none the less the reality which that Divine act has as its object. The doctrine of salvation

[1] Hebrews iv. 15.
[2] 2 Cor. v. 21; cf. Gal. iii. 13.
[3] Col. i. 15; iii. 10; Eph. iv. 24; 2 Cor. iv. 4.

implies a doctrine of man which must be expounded separately.

Human nature as donned or assumed by Christ is defined and unveiled in all its entirety in the fact of the Cross. It is a mortal nature; Christ came in the flesh to "suffer many things . . . and be killed." Christ[1] crucified is the only thing we can and ought to know[2] not only as regards the salvation of man but also as regards the nature of man. But this mortal character is not that which any secular anthropology can affirm as the characteristic of our existence; it has "in Christ" a special and unique signification: the signification of a judgment, a condemnation. Death is not the condition of man; it is the verdict pronounced upon man. Jesus underwent it as the terrible and unfathomable Will of God. Paul calls it "wages."[3] Thus Christian anthropology is essentially a consideration of death and the reasons for it.[4] The Old Testament already defined the very nature of all *flesh* ("flesh" being in Biblical terms the anthropological notion *par excellence*) in this way: "All flesh is grass."[5]

That, it will be said, is an absolutely negative content. It is true that any doctrine of man which is in conformity with the Gospel of Jesus Christ crucified must have a negative note as its dominant note: is not baptism—which is essentially the act in which the Church faces and takes hold of the natural reality of man—a baptism into the death of Christ, burial into death, conformity to His death?[6] Every time that this dominant note is weakened, every time that human possibilities are exalted in any way at all and even with all the reservations imaginable, it is the very substance of Christianity which is injured. If anthropology had to consist in investigating

[1] Matt. xvi. 21.
[2] 1 Cor. ii. 2.
[3] Rom. vi. 23.
[4] Rom. v. 12–14; Eph. ii. 5.
[5] Is. xl. 6–8.
[6] Cf. Rom. vi. 3–5.

what there was in man that could render the Cross of Christ useless, that could develop without it, that would have no need of being denied by the judgment of God pronounced on Calvary—then it would be purely and simply extra-Christian and even anti-Christian. In this sense there is an incompatibility between the Christian doctrine and the secular doctrines of man which tends directly or indirectly to exalt or to develop all or part of nature, to realize the vitality of nature as it is given to us.

What does this character of the Christian doctrine as a mortal judgment pronounced in the crucifixion of Christ on human nature signify? Above all, it designates the condition of that nature, its submission to a sovereign power—that is, its creaturely condition. Biblically it is the power of God to kill and make alive[1] which defines His creative function. Scripture never considers the relations of the world with God as the many cosmogonies do, that is, from the viewpoint of a physical or philosophical causality; but it does consider them as relations of dependence. The story of Genesis is perfectly explicit in this respect: it is the dominion of God over His work which is brought out, even and indeed especially when He delegates that dominion to man so that the latter may exercise it over the rest of creation.[2] When it is said there that man is "in the image of God," that affirmation is made in immediate relation with this right which is conferred upon him of subjecting to himself all that is on earth.[3] The condition of man thus consists before everything else in depending at every moment upon the will of an Other who alone has the power to call to life, to make alive, because life belongs to Him alone. He does not need us in order to exist,[4] whereas we never are except through Him. But this dependence does not define man

[1] Deut. xxxii. 39.
[2] Gen. i. 26–30.
[3] Gen. i. 26.
[4] Acts xvii. 25.

specifically; for it is the condition of the whole creation. That which constitutes humanity properly so-called, the distinctive character of human nature, is the knowledge of that relation, or, to put it otherwise, the personal and conscious character of the relations between this special creature that we are and God. To be "created in the image of God" thus does not mean at all the possession of some divinity in oneself; on the contrary, it is the knowledge that one is only an *image* in regard to God. The notion of Divine likeness as the Bible enunciates it implies the knowledge of a subordination and never the knowledge of an analogy of nature of which man could take advantage.[1] Not the pride of any autonomy, but the full knowledge of an absolute heteronomy. The fact that in God "we live, and move, and have our being"[2] means not, as the pantheists interpret it, that we participate in the Divine nature, but on the contrary that none of our reality ever has any existence except by the sovereign and transcendent Will of the Lord of heaven and earth.[3] It is this conception which the Biblical indications of the end of the creation make clear. The creation has its end, not in itself but in God to whom it must give glory. "The world is 'good' for man, that is to say that it allows him to serve God: that is the concrete content of faith in God the Creator."[4] All things were created *by* Christ, but also *for* Him.[5]

Here it is important to recall that according to the Bible the knowledge of this creaturely state is a knowledge of faith. It is "through faith" that "we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God."[6] This affirmation not only excludes the possibility of reducing the relation

[1] When Genesis ix. 6 and James iii. 9 recall this given fact of creation, they do so precisely in order to emphasize that every man made in the image of God belongs to Him and to Him alone.

[2] Acts xvii. 28. [3] Cf. Acts xvii. 24–27.

[4] Karl Barth. [5] Col. i. 16; cf. Eph. i. 4–6. [6] Heb. xi. 3.

of Creator and creature to a relation of causality, but also indicates that this relation is one of responsibility: of a Word spoken and believed. It is not by speculating on his origins that man can know what he is (though that is the postulate of all the anthropologies); it is by listening to what is announced to him and obeying what is commanded him. To know *by faith* that one is created is to know that one has to give an account of one's life because one does not possess it but is always receiving it.

But the fact that this faith is also faith in Christ, crucified by the Will of God, faith in the destruction of this life by the very One who gives it and without whom it does not for a moment exist; or to put it otherwise, the fact that the knowledge of our true nature takes place in the mortal judgment passed on Calvary upon that nature —that fact implies that the relation of creation between God and man is incomprehensibly and radically spoiled. That is the absolute paradox of the human condition according to the Bible: life as we know it is not life; it is the contrary of true life, it is already *dead* and not only promised to death.[1] It is *sinful.* The notion of sin in Christian doctrine must indeed be understood in a radical sense. Sin is not a mere modification of the first nature of man, of his creaturely state: it is the absolute contradiction of it. Does it not in effect consist in the refusal of subordination, in the proclamation of autonomy, in self-affirmation by disobedience?

To depend upon oneself, to be accountable only to oneself for one's life: that is the sovereign good for the fallen creature. Thus one cannot confuse the Biblical notion of sin with that of moral fault, that is, with the notion of an insufficiency to realize oneself or that of a free disobedience of one's conscience. Sin is a state of revolt against the Creator, against His sovereign right

[1] Eph. ii. 1 and 5; Luke ix. 60.

to give life and to take it away. Hence the relative human value of the works of that monstrous being which the sinner is because he is a creature without a Creator is of very little importance; these works are vitiated in their very origin. Sin is *original.*

Here again it is important to specify how according to the Bible we can know this condition of our concrete existence. Once again, this is a knowledge *of faith.* Only a Word of God—the Word of judgment pronounced on Calvary upon the human nature assumed by Christ—can reveal to us "the full gravity of sin" (*quanti ponderis sit peccatum:* Anselm) and the true nature of death. Death, the wages of sin, appears there indeed, not as the termination of life, but as the curse which strikes it, the deed and the effect of the Divine anger. Dereliction of God—"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"[1]—has taken the place of the communion with God which is the goal of Creation. It is a far cry from this absolute of punishment to the natural knowledge of death which the secular anthropologies may incorporate into their exaltation of life.

Such are the two essential given facts in the Christian doctrine of man. Each of them must be upheld as strictly as the other; their contradictory, paradoxical character must not for a moment be minimized; the nature of the knowledge which is accorded of it must never be forgotten or transformed into a natural, psychological or metaphysical knowledge. In order to avoid these three dangers, it is necessary to specify more explicitly each one of these facts, and also the mode in which they are revealed.

The fact that man is and always remains a creature does not appear only in the story of Genesis and before the Fall, so that one might imagine that since that Fall and before the restoration by Christ of his fallen nature,

[1] Matt. xxvii. 46.

man lived somehow outside his dependence upon God. Biblically, sinful man remains nevertheless without ceasing in the hands of Providence. As Psalm cxxxix indicates for example, no area and no moment of life escapes from the presence and the power of God. Behind and before, right up till the tomb, every existence is enveloped by the Creator. How would it still exist without that sovereign act? The sign of that Presence is that God manifests His sovereign presence in the world without any ambiguity. The invisible perfections of God, His eternal power and Godhead, are clearly seen from the creation of the world when they are considered in His works.[1] Above all, God does not cease to speak to man, that is, to treat him as His image, as being responsible before Him. He addresses Himself to him notably in the Law. The Law is not different from the creative Word. Just like the latter[2] it contains a gift, a demand, and a promise; like it, it marks a radical distinction and subordination as between the Creator and the creature; like it, it gives life by making responsible. The commandment leads to life.[3] To this universal manifestation, this constant Word of God, correspond what the secular anthropologies call the religious sense and the moral sense.

But we cannot forget that this primary fact of our nature —our creaturely condition—is known to us in the Word of judgment of the Cross: that the Law issues in the death of Christ. That is because sin is just as universal and just as constant as the manifestation and the Word of God the Creator. Biblically, none of the affirmations which relate to the sovereignty and the Providence of God makes the declaration of the radical corruption of the fallen Creation any the less severe. Because he is a sinner, man does not know at all the God by whom he lives and whose perfections are visible everywhere about him. His ignorance

[1] Cf. Rom. i. 20. [2] Gen. i. 26–30. [3] Rom. vii. 10.

breaks out in his idolatry; his religious sense is capable only of creating false gods, of adoring the creature instead of the Creator.[1] In a world where God is omnipresent, this man is "godless," "without God."[2] Because he is a sinner, man does not know God in the Law of God. He does not hear in it the Word of grace; on the contrary, he finds in it the occasion to assert himself, to justify himself in his autonomy; the occasion to sin. "Sin seduced me by the commandment, and by it made me die."[3] The moral sense is able only "to multiply the offence." More: because he is a sinner, man cannot do what he would,[4] he cannot love God, he cannot not sin; he has become irremediably the slave of himself, the slave of sin.[5]

Without a doubt, the essential thing in Christian anthropology consists in maintaining these two contradictory facts of human nature *at the same time*. For the temptation is great to limit the one by the other, to try to work out a synthesis of them. Usually the attempt is made to reduce the extent or the absoluteness of sin; only a part of our being (the body, or the flesh, or the will, but not the soul or the mind, etc. . . .) is considered to be irremediably fallen; or again, the revolt of the creature is reduced to an insufficiency, an incapacity, a weakness. Thus one ends by excusing or even justifying sin, by divinizing the creature through declaring it to be capable *by itself* of knowing and obeying God. Now it is necessary to understand that no *human* synthesis of this antagonism is possible, any more than it is humanly possible to make the Cross wisdom; it is and remains folly. Likewise it is necessary to renounce the attempt to identify the knowledge of these two contradictory facts with a philosophical pessimism or optimism. It is *in faith*, by Divine revelation, that

[1] Rom. i. 21–25. [2] Eph. ii. 12. [3] Rom. vii. 8–9.
[4] Rom. vii. 19. [5] Rom. vi. 17.

they are apprehended. And that special knowledge unveils to us at the same time the synthesis which is humanly impossible but divinely realized. We learn by it that what is for ever folly for *our* wisdom is nevertheless wisdom by and for *God*. "Howbeit we speak wisdom."[1] To put it otherwise: because we know the contradictory facts of our nature in the Cross which is also, which is firstly the act of reconciliation, the act which abolishes the contradiction, we know at the same time that the synthesis exists in God and that it is impossible to realize by any other than by Him, that is, impossible by ourselves. The word of judgment on Calvary, which reveals the whole content of Christian anthropology, is revelatory only because it is a word of grace; man knows who he is at the moment when he knows that he is freely saved from his perdition.

It is in this central affirmation of Christian theology, and notably of the theology of the Reformation, that the doctrine of man and the doctrine of the salvation of man meet. Without entering upon the content of the latter, we must recall in what way it qualifies the former. Let us say quite simply that anthropology always considers the creature in the perspective of the intention of God, who "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth"[2]; who "hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all."[3] It is the eschatological promise which lights up the temporal reality. It is the Resurrection which contains and unveils the meaning of the Cross. Thus the whole of human existence is referred to the fulfilment which is promised it by the Divine mercy; the creation finds its signification in the new creation of which Christ is "the first fruits"[4] and for which it groans.[5] It is thus, for example, that the Bib-

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 6. [2] 1 Tim. ii. 4. [3] Rom. xi. 32.
[4] 1 Cor. xv. 22–23. [5] Rom. viii. 18–25.

lical Revelation recalls with regard to the doctrine of the *imago Dei*[1] that only Jesus Christ is in our world the image of God, and that for us this resemblance is promised only for the future[2] and in the measure in which we, "beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory."[3]

From this point of view there also appears the meaning —which is of capital significance for anthropology—of the world of the present age in which we are living, of the *aeon* between the Fall and the Resurrection. For we are living in the contradictory economy of the Cross; we are at present being conserved in our *impossible* state of creatures in revolt. This time which is ours must not be understood to be anything other than that of the *patience* of God, the time which is left us to *repent*.[4] For Biblical anthropology, the form of this world is destined to pass, the truth of man is to come. It is of mercy that God seems to postpone the manifestation of this truth. During this period of human disobedience and Divine patience, we subsist strictly speaking by the *pardon* of God. In our present state, dependence on God is dependence on His mercy. Just as God the creator is God the reconciler, just as Christ, "in whom, by whom and also for whom we are created," is He who redeems us from our vain manner of life,[5] so if we "live, and move, and have our being," that is not because we are created beings who have not fallen, but because we are beings to whom God gives grace, will give grace, by restoring the vital bond which we refuse.

That is why this grace allows us to subsist, even in our condemnation and despite it. When we accept it in Christ, it is the end of the condemnation and the

[1] 2 Cor. iv. 4; Col. i. 15.
[2] 1 John iii. 2.
[3] 2 Cor. iii. 18; cf. Rom. viii. 29.
[4] 2 Peter iii. 9; cf. Heb. iii. 7–18.
[5] 1 Peter i. 18.

promise of our final re-establishment in our original *imago Dei.*

So, as long as the life of man here below goes on, it is called to repentance, to faith, and to hope. The Revelation discerns and awakens this great expectation in every human conscience and in the whole universe. And so the Christian does not work out two anthropologies: that of the Christian and that of the pagan. He knows that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now; and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit"[1]; and he leaves to Christ the *last* judgment which will distinguish between men.

This exposition, which we have endeavoured to keep strictly within the limits and language of the Bible, carries with it several consequences as regards the relations of the Christian anthropology with the secular anthropologies and also with such theologies as we shall call the pseudo-Christian anthropologies. Although these consequences have been indicated as occasion arose, it will doubtless be useful to present them more systematically. Perhaps this summary will also show at the same time that the facts of the Scriptural Revelation, despite the strict and negative concepts and the special language in which it is expressed, do not constitute an abstract scholasticism, but that on the contrary this hidden and mysterious wisdom[2] is always directed, in the act which unveils it, to the very real man, to the most concrete human situations; and even, as a matter of fact, that it is the most realistic of the interpretations of man—the only realistic one, just because it proceeds not from man but from God.

1. In the first place, this relation of Christian an-

[1] Rom. viii. 22–23.

[2] 1 Cor. ii. 7.

thropology with the humanistic anthropologies (in certain respects one may use this one term to describe both the secular and the pseudo-Christian anthropologies, because they both take their starting-point and set their criterion in the natural man)—this relation cannot be anything but negative and critical. It is *on principle* that an anthropology based upon the Revelation of the Cross refuses to allow any doctrine of man based on the knowledge which that man has of himself the possibility of being a final knowledge. For the Cross, that word of judgment, is precisely a verdict pronounced on *all* human nature. Man is there declared to be, not only incapable of knowing God completely but incapable of knowing Him partially; he is denounced there, not only as partially bad but as totally in revolt. The natural man—he who is considered by the non-Christian anthropologies—is he who crucifies the Son of God and it is he who in the crucified humanity of Jesus Christ is given up to the mortal anger of God; how could that man have any kind of knowledge of himself and of God? All that he is and all that he has, all that he thinks and all that he does is absolutely condemned. It is all the more important to emphasize the consistently critical nature of this relationship because Christian anthropology uses concepts which it is easy to confuse with the secular concepts of the humanist anthropologies: is not sin assimilable to moral evil, ethics to the Law of God, salvation by the promise of the Resurrection to redemption by the development of the true, the best human self?

2. The critical nature of this relation appears more clearly in the nature of the knowledge which it presupposes. Whereas the humanist anthropologies (and here we are thinking in particular of the pseudo-Christian anthropologies) consider everything, including the Divine Revelation, from the point of view of man, Christian

anthropology envisages nothing, not even human destiny, except in the light of God in Christ. Thus, the former judge and justify the Revelation according to its consistency with nature, the development which it ensures for nature, and they end by making salvation equivalent to the supreme realization of the highest possibilities of man; the latter accepts that the Revelation should really be a Revelation, that is, that it should be able to contradict and judge all that we are and know, what we call good and evil; it accepts that our nature should have to be re-created and not developed, that the goal of our life should be elsewhere than in this life, radically heterogeneous from this life, truly another life. For the humanist anthropologies, the reality of this world prefigures and announces the beyond to which it tends; for Christian anthropology it is the beyond—known in the merciful revelation of God—which determines the knowledge and the evaluation of the reality of this world. The former enclose human life in the limits of the present world, even if these be extended to infinity; the latter considers that the new, radically new creation promised in Christ is alone able to give its meaning to this world which is destined to pass away and to our life in this world. Thus, to know God, the good, man and his destiny *by oneself* is absolutely opposed to knowing God, the good, man and his destiny *by God*, that is, by faith.

3. This relation exists none the less for being a critical one: that is to say that the Christian anthropologist is not ignorant of the other anthropologies, or, more simply, that the Revelation does not purely and simply deny the fallen nature. It is true that man does not cease to be a creature, it is true that God manifests Himself in the world, as the religious sense and the moral sense testify. And equally it is true that the human unrest, expressed in all the anthropologies, testifies in them to the truth which

they seek without being able to find it. Yes, indeed, this relation exists. It is necessary always to take care in defining it to maintain its critical character: that is to say, that the manifestation of God must not be confused with the knowledge of God or Revelation, nor the religious sense in any of its forms with the Christian faith. God manifests Himself; but man, far from discovering Him in this manifestation, finds in it an occasion for idolatry. God makes known His will; but man finds in this law the occasion for a mortal righteousness of works, and remains always without excuse.[1] So, far from being a point of departure for a true knowledge of God and a true obedience to His commandment, the human religions and moralities, because they are a total perversion of the normal relation with the Creator, do nothing but emphasize the culpability of sinful man; they do not in any degree constitute a natural theology which would need only to be completed by the Revelation; on the contrary, they are denounced by that Revelation as irrefutable proofs of forfeiture. But such as they are, they are the *sign* of the responsible nature of man. Man is not a plant or an animal; and when the Word of God, which accuses him by giving him grace on Calvary, is addressed to him, he can receive it and discover in it the hidden truth of his being, that truth which he had perverted; while recognizing himself to be culpable and inexcusable, he can recognize the mercy of God by which he lived without knowing it, the goodness by which he was created and which incomprehensibly has not ceased to sustain him even in the act by which he refused that goodness. To sum up, if the Revelation is in no case the development of natural religion, it is nevertheless from the Revelation that natural religion draws its significance; the false gods are really false before the living God, but in

[1] Rom. i. 20; ii. 1.

their falsity they testify to the expectant waiting for the living God.

It is not necessary to develop at length the applications of these remarks to the various anthropologies which claim to oppose or to be compared with the Christian anthropology. All of them can by definition end only in a glorification of man. Even if they are pessimistic, they still exalt man, who is capable of knowing the misery of his condition; they see in this revolt a supreme dignity. Even if they believe a harmonious realization of the human to be impossible, they find a higher value in that knowledge. And in any case, most of the secular anthropologies are more or less explicitly and naïvely optimistic. Whether they conceive the realization of their humanism as being bound up with a progressive knowledge of nature, or as being determined by the expansion of the vital instinct, or again as being dependent upon certain external economic and social conditions; whether they be moralistic, vitalistic, or Marxist, they start from this postulate: man is capable of realizing his destiny to "become what he is" and even of surpassing himself. For these doctrines, history tells us these magnificent attempts of our species; it describes to us the movement of that progress. Each of these anthropologies also considers that it can serve as the basis of an ethic, the duties of man being written in his nature and being ultimately reducible to living in conformity with the real demands of that nature. When the secular anthropologies define evil, it is always as an inner contradiction, as an infidelity to oneself, as a treason of the given human being. For them, man sins against himself. And that conception implies that man has the possibility of overcoming that violence which he does himself, that his freedom may triumph over it, if external conditions allow this freedom the possibility of exercise.

In face of all these efforts which desire to legitimize

man, a truly Biblical anthropology begins by accepting the truth of the proposition that "before God, man is always in the wrong"[1]; but in doing so it maintains that that condemnation of nature is known only *before God* and pronounced only *in Christ*, that is to say, that it is a revelation of the Cross and in no way the conclusion of an autonomous critique. The Christian faith is no more pessimistic than it is optimistic in the philosophical sense of the term. The perfectible man of the doctrines of progress is not the man who is called to be restored by a new creation to the original *imago Dei*; the bad man of the moralists is not the sinful man of the Gospel. But at the same time a truly Biblical anthropology will affirm that this mortal verdict is revealed in the Divine act which by the vicarious sacrifice of Christ absolves the revolt and blots out the condemnation, and thus that it is in salvation that sin is at once denounced and redeemed. So it will not profess only or primarily a negative knowledge of man; on the contrary, it will always announce positively the redemptive sovereignty of God. It will call to faith and not to despair. Because of this Gospel which it preaches it will include and teach an ethic of obedience—not an obedience which saves, as the other religious moralities do, but an ethic of obedience in grateful recognition of the salvation freely accorded in Christ. The works of man, who is at the same time condemned and redeemed, will be in it, not meritorious works, but works of gratitude and witness. Finally, a truly Biblical anthropology will recall that the world lives by the *patience* of God; that repentance must be preached in it at the same time as salvation, but that our human impatience must not set itself in the place of this Divine patience, that *we* do not have to pronounce the last judgment on human works—moralities, civilizations, histories—but that we have to accept them as the

[1] Kierkegaard.

place where the message of grace must providently be proclaimed, and also as the "groans of creation" after the promised Resurrection.

Practically, anthropology must be for Christian theology not the occasion for making the folly of the Cross acceptable to the human mind, but as the occasion for announcing that folly, which is known only by the spiritual man, but which enables that spiritual man to judge all things without himself being judged of any man.[1] Some will fear that a message which is so exclusive, so deliberately indifferent to the positive efforts of the natural man to understand himself and the enigma of his destiny, may end by making the Christian faith yet more foreign to those who do not profess it. Even if this fear were based on practical experience, it ought not to be retained; for the Church well knows that its criterion resides in its faithfulness to the Revelation and not in the human success of its preaching. But it has no such basis. For if man expects anything of the Church, it is that it should let him know, not what he already knows about himself but what he does not know, not the way in which he can best realize himself but the way in which God has Himself fully realized His Redemption.

It is, therefore, important that the Church and the theology of the Church should see strictly to it that they conserve the purity of the Gospel message in the matter of anthropology. When we think, for example, of the affirmations of an anthropological character upon which several contemporary theories of the State, nation, or class are based, it seems to us that the Church will have to adopt an attitude which is at once negative and positive. Negatively, it will have to defend itself against all the solicitations which come to it from outside to adulterate its doctrine, and against the efforts made to mobilize it in

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 15.

the service of human values of any order. In face of the totalitarian State and its designs, the Church will refuse to admit or to teach any theoretical and practical affirmation which would assign to man any final dependence (race, blood, nation, or class, etc.) other than his dependence with regard to God; it will refuse to admit that any unconditional obedience—whether that be given to the State as personified in a dictator, or to institutional democracy, or to the organized proletariat—may be demanded of that man. And that because it knows only one Lord of all men, who tolerates no other master beside Him.[1]

Again, the Church will refuse to admit or to teach that the Fall is not real or complete; that a democracy or a dictatorship of the proletariat is legitimated by the natural goodness of man or of the class in question; or that membership of any race or nation, said to be based in the order of Creation, assures to man any integrity, any kind of innocence which has no need to be redeemed by the Cross.

Again, the Church will refuse to admit or to teach that there can be any knowledge of God and of His Will other than the knowledge given in the Scriptural Revelation, that is, outside the witness given by the prophets and the apostles to Jesus Christ. And so it will refuse to allow that any temporal circumstances or any tradition should be substituted for this exclusive knowledge or claim to correct or complete it. Neither flesh nor blood, and so neither race nor history, can inspire the conduct of man by unveiling to him the intentions of his Creator.

Positively, stimulated by these snares which are laid for it, warned by these solicitations of every kind, the Church will take knowledge of the anthropology of its faith, and will proclaim it in word and in deed with a strict Biblical fidelity. Seeing in every man (and not only in

[1] "No man can serve two masters."—Matt. vi. 24.

its members) a creature in the image of God, it will defend in each and for each one among them, not the sacred rights of human personality, not any moral value, but "the brother for whom Christ died"[1]; it will refuse on principle to abandon any man (and not only its members) to the totalitarian attempts and claims of any earthly master and lord, or to entrust the salvation of anyone to any other than the sole Saviour Jesus Christ: at the same time it will claim the right to proclaim its own message with a perfectly clear purity, even if it contradicts the ideologies of the day, and it will openly protest against these ideologies and the practices which are inspired by them.

At the same time, because we are living in the time of the Divine patience, the Church will recognize the way in which, according to the Bible, God shows this patience. For example, it will recognize the limited rights of the State—limited, but legitimate within their limits. It will therefore refuse to substitute itself for this authority which the mercy of God has instituted to maintain the existence of a creation in revolt; it will pray for it, and recommend everyone to submit himself to it as to a Divine Will—to an order, ephemeral but real, imposed upon our fallen nature. In the same way, it will recognize the existence of the nation as the place where we receive our Christian vocation and not as a restriction imposed upon that vocation. The communion of grace always transcends national frontiers like all human frontiers; it is *communio sanctorum*; but it is lived *in* the national community where God has brought us into the world. It is in our earthly fatherland that we await the true fatherland, which is heavenly. Because God has "put us in our place," we do not hold this place to be indifferent, and we love our people with a love which *gratefully recognizes* a Divine intention

[1] 1 Cor. viii. 11.

in it and which is *responsible*, and engages our Christian loyalty.

Above all else, in face of all the human anthropologies, ethics and realities, the Church declares the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him, and which have not entered into the heart of man.[1] It will not try to legitimize or to prove this revelation by showing how it agrees with human aspirations or reason. But it will preach that that revelation is altogether turned towards man and the world, that man and that world so loved by God that He gave His only-begotten Son to save them, to make them really that new creation where all old things are passed away, "the tabernacle of God with men."[2] So, by declaring the Gospel, as is its only task, the Church will teach man, not only to know himself as he is known of God, but, what is infinitely more important, with what an incomprehensible Love he is always loved.

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 9.

[2] Rev. xxi. 3.

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